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THE DIVINITY OF CHRIST
IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

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ROBERTUS E. BROWNE, S.J.

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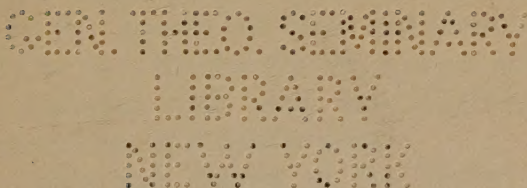
THE DIVINITY OF CHRIST IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

BY

J. HERBERT WILLIAMS, M.A.

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"THE NEW PELAGIANISM," "INSPIRATION," "POPE PIUS IX"

"Quotidie scrutantes Scripturas, si haec ita
se haberent"—ACTS XVII. 11



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PREFACE

THE faith of Christians need not be disturbed by the waning influence of Christianity in the world, which was indeed foretold by Christ as signalling the approach of His Second Coming. In the late world-war some persons imagined a revival of religious devotion, but it was a mistake ; what revealed itself was rather uttermost ignorance of the Gospel among men and officers alike. The erosion of evangelical doctrine does fresh damage year by year. The creed that belongs to Scripture and Tradition, that was taught by the Apostles of Christ and preserved inviolate in the Christian Church, is more completely discarded with each new generation. The Second Coming is not far away.

The office and dignity of the Mother of Jesus were early disallowed by dissidents ; now the eternal punishment of the wicked is laid on the shelf ; the inspiration of Holy Scripture is rationalised into less significance. Those

derelictions I have signalised in previous publications. The design of my present contribution is an attempt to vindicate the doctrine of the Incarnation of the Word of God as belonging to Holy Scripture, and therefore inferentially to the creed of Christian evangelisation. Let it not be thought a contention of common undertaking without interest for the reader of to-day. The vindication takes, if I am not mistaken, new ground (as being concerned with the language alone, waiving the truth, of what is written), it furnishes Christian apologetic with a fresh weapon that must be taken into account and given the consideration of contraveners. The argument, when its special character and determined limitation are borne in mind, is conceived to be, as it runs, unanswerable, and though not indeed demonstrating the truth of Christian belief, it is discovered in its consequence absolutely to exclude from Christian classification the whole of dissident and liberal religion.

The Scriptural proof, which constitutes the basis of the argument, is necessarily dry and laborious reading, with its wearisome accumulation of texts, page after page and chapter after chapter. Chapters III.—VII. may go unread until the perusal of the others has maybe provoked a

disposition to follow the complete inquiry ; any one Excursus of the four at the end of the volume should, beyond all doubt, be of general interest.

It does the book an injustice, however, to imagine it a learned work and suitable only to the perusal of experts. Let not the reader be frightened away by the occurrence of Greek sentences. They are pretty well always accompanied by their English translation.

The author would crave indulgence, as in other publications, for the intrusion of a layman, under the circumstances this time (1) of his having a *personal* knowledge, beyond the Catholic generality, of the vagaries of heretical theology, and (2) of his possessing a long-familiar acquaintance with the *Greek* Testament, such as few writers would claim. The argument is not theological but literary ; not demanding for its exposition an acquaintance with the *Summa* of St. Thomas of Aquinum, but solely an acquaintance with Greek as employed in the New Testament.

J. HERBERT WILLIAMS.

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THE DIVINITY OF CHRIST IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

RELIGIOUS controversy, since some seventy years ago, is become generally and generically different from what it ever was before. In the age of the primitive heresies (Arian, Nestorian, etc.), in the age of the Lutheran revolt, one dogmatic expression opposed another; now dogma is an offence, express it how you will; the assault is not for substitution of anything different, but for pure negation of the existing creed. The change concerns, among other objectives, the capital doctrine of Christianity, as was formerly supposed, the belief in the Divinity of Christ.

St. Ignatius, the contemporary of Apostles, wrote: "Christ, my God, was crucified for me"; St. Justin Martyr, but little later, argued in plain terms that Christ, "since He is the

first-begotten Word of God, is also God ” ; in the recently discovered *Didaché Apostolorum* we have, “ Hosanna to God, the Son of David.” But these are viewed as expressions of devotion and not of theological affirmation, or as isolated examples of language that the primitive age does not exhibit as a whole. Christ is to be confessed the Son of God, but without explanation ventured or theological inference prescribed. The present generation has grown up with such indeterminate belief, taught that Christ is the Son of God, but not told that He is God ; parents and teachers by common consent thought it well to avoid that form of phrase.* Thus there is recession from the early *Deum de Deo, Lumen de Lumine, Deum verum de Deo vero* ; no alternative proposed to the creed of Nicæa, but a qualified intention in its recital.

It is seldom that any one is convinced by argument. Convictions are formed in the mind and become habitual as years go on, and habits are not soon altered. The mental attitude is modified by experiences, of slight consequence

* But in our grandfathers’ day there was a popular hymn, still found in hymn-books, which had the verse :

“ Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,
 Save in the death of Christ my God ;
 All the vain things that charm me most
 I sacrifice them to His blood.”

singly but one sustaining another, incidents and events of year by year that are woven into the pattern of our individual lives. But opposing speech passes and leaves behind not a trace of its intervening. Accordingly, while doctrinal Christianity is in our time rejected or disparaged—in its credentials, in its evidences, in its history and significance as testified by its first Evangelists—the proposal of this present treatise is not to combat any position of such rationalistic determination. The character and the doctrine of Christ as conveyed to us by His biographers may be unreal, the record may have no intrinsic authenticity. That is not argued. No theological dogma is defended ; no disproof rebutted. The matter in hand is of smaller dimension. The investigation is concerned only with what the record, unvarnished though it be, declares and intends as its meaning. Let Evangelists, let writers of Epistles within the New Testament, be of uncertain identity ; let the story of the early establishment of the Church be chiefly fiction,—yet it is permissible, and surely not without pertinence, to determine what is really said by the writers (who are demonstrated * not to exceed in date the second century), and thence

* By the recent discovery of the *Diatessaron* of Tatian, even if there were nothing else.

what was the sense and belief of the primitive age which the writings either embodied or, at any rate, obtaining acceptance, did not traverse. The primitive age is not thereupon any less to be accused of ignorant credulity and the taint of superstition, but what its creed was is certainly discovered—not without historical and ethnological interest, if there were no other interest attaching.

The investigation does not threaten to be a lengthy and laborious affair, because it is only a single article of the Creed that is traced—the doctrine of the Divinity of Christ. He who walked on the shore of the Lake of Galilee was not (in modern opinion) the Maker of those with whom He conversed and of the heaven above their heads. God has, we are told (Heb. i. 1), spoken to us in these latest times by His Son ; but He did not speak Himself—the tongue that spoke was not the tongue of God ; a man cannot be actually and absolutely God. The Catholic belief, meanwhile, is not quite that, but different ; not that a man can be God, but that Jesus is God who became man—*et homo factus est*. The matter of succeeding pages here will be demonstrative of such also being the conception of the writers of the New Testament and consequently of the Christians of their time.

It is not expected that the demonstration should be found conclusive; the object in view is not anything so preposterous—that the case should be considered proved and not a word more to be said. But the complete collection of passages in Gospel and Epistle so apparently importing, their analytical determination of meaning against misunderstanding that belongs to a routine and unreflecting perusal, the contrary elucidation of texts that are made prominent in Unitarian disputation, the multitude and congruity of references brought into view, may perhaps give occasion for reflection, may raise a disturbing doubt that had not been felt before; whether, if the Divinity of Christ is refused, it may necessitate not only arraigning the faith of His first disciples, not only discounting the effect of enthusiasm and devotional zeal, but whether Holy Scripture may have to be set aside altogether; whether, as for miracle, as for doctrinal reflection, so for the very words and language, we may find it necessary that we should leave quotation alone and make up our Christianity out of the conjectural presumption of our unassisted minds.

This has been in some measure already done by critical inquiry, and consequently neither can it be imagined that the collation of Scriptural

testimony when made should have any general or large effect upon religious conviction. No particular consideration is now given by dissidents to the accumulation of evidence as exhibited in its inferential consequence and bearing. It is not any longer on the testimony of Scripture, but on its inadequacy, that the modern theology is constructed.

Fully perceived, however, if it should by any one happen to be, the argued consequence goes beyond the estimation we may hold of the Word of God, whether infallibly true or containing error, whether the sole foundation or only subsidiary in the determination of our faith. A blank wall of exclusion is drawn, cutting off Holy Scripture altogether from the Unitarian, the Nestorian, or whatever opposing profession of doctrine at this date. Deny the Divinity of Christ, and you must support your religious position in its entirety—so the appearance would suggest—by reason and natural morality, by metaphysical philosophy; you cannot reach a hand to Holy Scripture to exemplify and beautify your thoughts; you must allow that you have parted with Holy Scripture in its every word and phrase.

That precisely is the consequence that should present itself, that and no other directly drawn,

when the end of the exposition is reached. Very likely it fails of being achieved; the reader may only say to himself that he will bear in mind the suggestion and see what he thinks. Yet upon some minds it has an effect—the notion of putting the Bible quite away—an effect ill-relished, inducing the sincere believer (in his faulty religion) to halt on his way, to re-consider his road, and to turn back, God helping him; an effect that cannot confidently be anticipated, not even for the benefit of one here or there, but if of one here or there, then infinitely worth while, amply repaying the labour bestowed and compensating for the disregard of the generality.

Religious reflection, however, is rarely cultivated. It is thought sufficient to observe the obligations of piety, and these are often but negligently observed in the midst of other interests and avocations. Add to this that the piously disposed may still look upon questions of theology as either already determined or as being perplexities that never will be. Could either of these classes, whether the indifferent or those who disapprove inquiry, be got to conceive that here is a different species of disquisition—no argument offered them, no assertion or denial of doctrine, nothing apologetic, nothing

critical, neither authority nor free thought advocated—it might perhaps seem less unacceptable. Let the proposal be once more explained. They are furnished with a collection of sentences of Holy Scripture* bearing upon the particular doctrine, ready found for them, texts that are cited by Trinitarians and texts that are cited by Unitarians, and the linguistic significance, when doubtful, perspicuously explained for their behoof—nothing more than that; and the enterprise, it is submitted, not having been hitherto adventured with the same completeness or with the same rigid restriction to the single issue. It is a novelty in theological dissertation, there is an unexpectedness in the design, a certain character of specialism may be discovered to belong to the execution. May there be under such conditions less unwillingness to discover what is to be said? It is not a very hopeful chance, but the suggestion seems to be at the outset worth making.

* The English of the texts is not uniformly that of any English Version of the New Testament. The quotations are made from the Greek page and the translation is accordingly. The verse numeration is that of the accepted Greek editions.

CHAPTER II

UNITARIAN CHRISTOLOGY

UNITARIANS pretend that the account of the origin and public life of Jesus, which we have in the Gospels, is simple and natural. He is born of humble parents, passes an obscure life for many years, is baptised as others by John the Baptist, and, after John is imprisoned, comes into public recognition with the same message : " Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." He gathers about Him a small company of disciples, whom He indoctrinates with a higher morality, to love their enemies and to become as little children, while He reveals to them the charity of God as their Father in heaven. And so onwards. The miraculous setting of the history is easily distinguished from the history.

Not easily, however, when the question is not of the history but of the historian ; when the point of view of the writers is the matter in hand, not the truth of what they write ; when we do not ask what manner of man Jesus was, but what the writers intended to represent Him

to be. There is nothing "simple and natural" in the Evangelical account of events and attendant circumstances. An angel announces to Mary her conception, it is revealed to Joseph that her child has no human father, at the birth a multitude of angels appear to shepherds and proclaim it, at the baptism a voice from heaven declares Jesus to be the Son of God. His Galilean ministry is attended by the super-human manifestations of His walking on the water of the lake, of His stilling the tempest, of the creative act of His multiplication of loaves to feed many thousands ("five thousand besides women and children"). The view of the narrators is clearly that He is not as the founders of other religions, that a "greater than Moses is here" (Heb. iii. 3).

Unitarians, however, persist in their representation: the Gospel narrative is simple in its style and simple also in its chronicle. Before the time of the final Jerusalem conflict, the story of the Galilean period is idyllic, as a pastoral poem: life in the open air, in fields, on the lake shore, with fishermen; at Nazareth or Capernaum, in the house of Joseph and Mary, or in the house of Simon; a travelling band of preaching brothers, without purse or scrip, with each his staff alone, to be lodged and fed by charity,

saying, "Peace be to this house," or shaking off the dust from their feet as they left some unfriendly town behind them.

The discourse of Jesus during those weeks is harmonious with the surroundings ; by precept and parable ; of the forgiveness of the prodigal, of the example of the good Samaritan ; how that the poor are blessed and the meek shall inherit the earth ; His disciples are but a little flock, but to them it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven ; they must take no thought for the morrow, food and clothing their heavenly Father will provide for them ; they that weep shall laugh and they that mourn shall be comforted, and blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God. Nothing theologically profound, nothing polemic, unless it be the denunciation of the rich and of the Pharisees, which John the Baptist also spoke ; yet a new revelation, the founding of a fresh religion, the incoming of a spiritual purity, of a moral sincerity, such as had never been preached before. The Galilean life, the Galilean indoctrination, is simple as told in the Gospel record.

The picture presented is not what one would naturally expect with the appearance of God upon earth (which the Catholic creed declares), what one would think could hardly help being

given of the behaviour of others towards Jesus, when they knew that it was God they approached. The style and language in which the Gospels are composed is not the style and language that must, one would feel certain, be employed by any one who undertook to write an account of such transcendent event and was among those who believed in it as the advent of God to save creation, precursor of another advent when He should come in flaming fire to destroy it. For thirty years Jesus is an inmate of a humble household, He works at a trade, He has no particular distinction from others, unless of piety and patience. Suddenly, at the end of the thirty years, He comes into public cognizance, He is Christ the Son of God ; for a brief three years, till He is put to death. It is a natural story of the best and greatest that ever lived, illustrating the contention of the Platonic Socrates that perfect justice, to prove itself such, must have suffering and crucifixion as its only guerdon. It is not any theophany, except as the revelation of goodness is the revelation of God. So, and not otherwise, is it taught us that "he who hath seen Jesus hath seen the Father."

The behaviour of others in their relations with Jesus, whatever its character, appears in

the narrative to be ordinarily on the natural human level, and the writers find no need of explaining or representing otherwise. His chosen disciples associate with Jesus as devoted and reverential believers, but with no apparent constraint or timidity. They walk with Him through the cornfields and pluck the ears of corn, they enter the boat with Him, they go apart with Him into a solitary place for rest and converse, they inquire of Him about His parables, they tell Him of their doings.

He is for them more than rabbi, more than prophet; He is Christ. But He is not God, continuously, at every turn, by the very sight of Him and sound of His voice. If to them He was God, the picture of the Galilean time is impossible. How can they freely walk and sit with One who could in a moment bring them to nothing—One on whom their breath and life from hour to hour depend? How can the disciple whom Jesus loved recline upon the breast of God? When the sacred Host is brought into a house, the Catholic kneels before the priest who enters bearing It. Must not the disciples of Jesus, believing Him to be the Word made flesh, must not those who so believed, be disposed continually to prostrate themselves before Him, every speech an adoration, every

petition a prayer? There is nothing of that kind in the description of any one of the Four Evangelists. The Evangelists appear to have no imagination or conception of the difficulty that is here presented, nor to feel it necessary, as they would feel, if they really believed in the Divinity, to explain how it was that the disciples, having also themselves that belief, failed altogether to show a correspondent behaviour. If the question is of the historian, of the point of view of the writers, of the representation of Jesus that they intend to give—well, what is to be made of this piece of evidence?

The reply would be to disallow the version that is placidly proposed of the doctrine of the Divinity of Christ. It may certainly be conceded that Evangelists and Apostles hold no *such* belief. The Word of God, when He took human flesh, according to the expression of St. Paul, “emptied Himself” (ἐκένωσεν ἑαυτόν, Phil. ii. 7) of His divine splendence; He “became in fashion as a man.” Thus Jesus associated with His disciples as one of themselves, “in all points as we are, only without sin”; there was nothing of Deity, clear and apparent about Him; to confess the Son of God was a superior act of faith on occasion of some exercise of power or manifestation of

glory that Jesus vouchsafed. Deity was present, but latent, *latens Deitas*, as subsequently for Christians in the Sacred Host :

“Visus, gustus, tactus in Te fallitur.”

There was rarely any sensible revelation. It is not rightly said that God appeared on earth, unless with the addition that He appeared as Man.

Thus it is excusable that the chosen disciples did not from the first moment of their calling understand. “We have found the Messiah,” but what more was not therewith conceived. Jesus declared it to be no naturally formed conviction but a direct revelation from His Father, when Peter answered, “Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God.” The confession was thus made, but thereafter the belief need not always be perfect. When Jesus named Himself the true Bread from heaven and many turned from Him, He asked of the Twelve, “Will ye too go away?” that Peter might anticipate his inspired utterance. On the eve of His betrayal Jesus had said to Peter, “Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to My Father and He shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?” Yet “all the disciples forsook Him and fled” (Matt. xxvi. 53, 56). Even after the Resurrection, when Jesus walked with the two disciples to Emmaus, He found

occasion to "upbraid them with their unbelief and hardness of heart."

However, it was the Resurrection that finally made sure the belief of the Eleven in the Divinity of Jesus. As St. Paul wrote (Rom. i. 4), He was "declared to be the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead." When Peter and John came to the sepulchre on Easter morning, "they saw and believed"—believed not only that Jesus lived, but that He "had life in Himself." On Low Sunday Thomas beheld Him, His wounds in hands and side, and exclaimed, "My Lord and my God"—a text that the Unitarian, for all his reluctancy, cannot change from its first-hand sense to the satisfaction of any other than himself, nor yet quite to his own satisfaction.*

The theological *distinguo* which has been expressed, and which undeniably represents the Catholic doctrine, suffices to explain any imperfection in the belief of the chosen disciples during the pre-Resurrection period, as also suffices for the manner of the Evangelical narrative.

* See Excursus I. (p. 129) on the Resurrection. It does not matter one whit, though Thomas should never have said anything of the kind, not for the thesis here proposed. The Evangelist includes the utterance in his account and conceives of it as rightly and properly belonging to the Person of Jesus that the speech should be made; it is according to the belief of the early time that Jesus should be called by St. Thomas his Lord and God.

The Unitarian representation has further proof to offer. The prophet is without honour in his father's house. After His public preaching and working of miracles, when multitudes followed Him "from Galilee and from Decapolis, and from Jerusalem and Judæa, and from beyond the Jordan" (Matt. iv. 25), when "the world was gone after Him" (John xii. 19), at the close of His mission (vii. 5), still His "brethren" did not believe in Him. "If thou art a prophet," they said, "give public proof of it." His friends endeavoured to get possession of Him, telling one another that He was mad (Mark iii. 21). In His childhood, when He was twelve years old, when His parents took Him to Jerusalem and lost Him there, and after three days' search found Him in the Temple, even His parents do not seem to have understood His precedent divine Sonship—"Wist ye not that in My Father's house I must be?" *

* Still His mother "kept all these sayings in her heart." When it was told Jesus that His mother and brethren were waiting to see Him, He stretched out His hand over His disciples: "These are My mother and sisters and brothers, whoever shall do the will of My Father in heaven." But His Mother was chief of such from the first beginning when she said, "Be it unto me according to Thy word." ἐν τοῖς τοῦ πατρὸς μου is "in My Father's house," just as εἰς τὰ ἴδια (Acts xxi. 6) is "to their own homes." Compare John ii. 16, "Make not My Father's house a house of traffic."

The contemporaries of Jesus, those of His own neighbourhood or wherever He journeyed, did not attribute to Him a divine personality, but even disparaged Him, on account of His origin and condition—"Is not this Jesus, whose father and mother we know?" "Whence hath He this wisdom?" "Is not this the carpenter?" "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?"

But it is utterly irrelevant to bring such recorded evidence of unbelief into the Unitarian argument as the illustration would here be applied. Just as was said at the beginning of the chapter about the rejection of the miraculous setting of the Gospel history. When it is a question of the view of the narrators, such speeches as have been instanced are clearly meant to represent the dullness and perversity of those who make them. Jesus Himself is reported to have so regarded them. He quotes: "The heart of this people is become gross and their ears are dull of hearing." He tells His disciples that "a prophet is not without honour save in his own country and in his father's house." It is exceptional when the man whom Jesus has cured of congenital blindness is instructed that Jesus is the Son of God and worships Him. Or when the soldiers sent to take Jesus return without Him and plead in

their excuse, "Never man spoke as this man." Or when, on the death of Jesus, a centurion exclaims, "Truly this was the Son of God." But it is quite impossible to dispute that these speeches are in the view of the Evangelist the true appreciation as against the others, and are reported as testimony to the real character of the Personality of Jesus and of its influence upon those in contact with Him. The centurion at Capernaum (Luke vii. 8) conceives of Jesus by His word, by His will, to rule what should happen a mile away.

Nor is it true to represent that there is in the record no evidence of its being the record of the appearance of God upon our earth, no mention of awe and fear being exhibited by those in immediate association with Jesus or by others who were brought into occasional relation with His working of miracles and with Himself. Such effect is depicted in the narrative and the conviction of the witness is made sufficiently manifest. When Jesus stilled the storm, the disciples "feared exceedingly and said one to another, What manner of man is this?" (Mark iv. 41). When He came to them walking on the sea, and got into their boat, "they worshipped Him, saying, Of a truth Thou art the Son of God" (Matt. xiv. 33). At the

Transfiguration the three chosen witnesses "knew not what to say, for they were sore afraid." When He told His disciples that the Son of Man should be put to death and should rise again the third day, "they understood not that saying and were afraid to ask Him" (Mark ix. 32).

It was the same with others than the privileged witnesses of these occasions. In the Capernaum synagogue in the beginning of His miracles, when Jesus cast out an unclean spirit, the people there "were all amazed and said one to another, What new thing is this? for with authority He commandeth the unclean spirits and they obey Him" (Mark i. 27). And "the people were astonished at His doctrine, for He taught them as one having authority and not as the Scribes" (Matt. vii. 29). After the miracle of the Gadarene swine, the people of the place "come to Jesus and see him that was possessed of the devil, and had the legion, sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind, and they were afraid" (Mark v. 15). In Gethsemane, at the Betrayal, when Jesus showed Himself to the officers who came to take Him, "they went backward and fell to the ground."

There are occasions on which Jesus is recorded to have exhibited within the recognition of

bystanders a power and majesty beyond the human measure. He drove out the traffickers and money-changers from the Temple—"make not My Father's house a house of merchandise"—and He would not give the priests His authority for doing it. He inquired of those in the Synagogue, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath Day?" and they did not answer. He looked round on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts. "Stand forth in the midst, thou with the withered hand." And He restored the hand (Mark iii. 1-5). A Pharisee who entertained Him disparaged Jesus in his own mind because He did not supernaturally know the character of St. Mary Magdalene, and suffered "a sinner" to anoint His feet. Jesus, however, read his thoughts*: "Simon, I have something to say to thee."

Especially in the scenes of the Passion, though suffering a mental agony that caused Him to sweat blood, though subjected to extremest cruelties and most degrading indignities, compelled at the last to carry His cross and fainting under it, Jesus is depicted as having throughout a serenity, a self-possession, an unmoved patience—*passus est quia Ipse*

* He is also described as reading the thoughts of others in Matt. ix. 4; Mark viii. 17; John xvi. 19.

voluit—which belong, not to the Sufferer but to the divine Saviour who bears the sins of the world. Two words of His may be expressive enough. To Pilate: “My kingdom is not of this world.” To the women on the road to Calvary: “Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for Me, but weep for yourselves and your children.”

But illustrative examples may be culled from almost any chapter of any one of the Gospels. And it should not be missed that the Evangelists evidently convey this idea in their narratives—whether by an intentional design which they had in common, or unconsciously in the writing—because they were writing of One who was more than human.* The Evangelists appre-

* It is a misfortune for any one who is unable to read the Gospel in Greek. In the reader's own language the reading runs too easily; the successive pictures do not present themselves each as complete in itself and arresting to the imagination, but pass quickly over one into another; the scene shifts before it is fully taken into the mind. Besides, in the order of Providence, Greek was selected as the vehicle of the new Revelation, which we may therefore presume to be best expressed, its mystery and its divinity, in Greek. Translation of any masterpiece, though no inspired writing—the creations of Dante or Cervantes or Shakespeare—must sacrifice the effect of the linguistic expression, the implication and suggestion, of the original style. In the elaborate edition of St. Matthew's Gospel by Fr. Maas, S.J. (Herder, 1898), though the Hebrew of a phrase is frequently given, there is hardly ever a Greek word written in the

ciated what might be, and what they knew to have been, the nature and effect of the appearance of Deity, under whatever fashion, upon earth, and they cannot be said to have failed to express it in their relation of the acts and sayings of Jesus. It was, then, their own belief and doctrine that Jesus was the incarnate Son of God, the Son of God after a real and eternal generation, and they conceived themselves to be writing about Him as such without anything else entering into their minds ; it was the general belief and nothing new or unexpected when they so wrote ; what would disturb and offend was if they had not so written.

In their narratives, Jesus is related to have been given the name of Son of God on several occasions ; to have Himself claimed the name (John ix. 35 ; Matt. xvi. 17, xxvi. 63), to have allowed its significance of equality and oneness with God (John v. 18, x. 30) ; by the Evangelist before His birth and by the speech assigned to St. Thomas after His resurrection He was

annotations. The learned editor gives Matt. i. 23, according to the Vulgate version, "Behold a virgin shall be with Child," without mention of the exact rendering of the Greek of the Evangelist (as well as of the passage of Isaiah quoted by him) which the English language admits, "Behold, *the* virgin shall conceive." Surely a point of importance for Catholic doctrine.

named God plainly and simply, without addition or qualification ; He is related to have been offered worship, by the Magi at Bethlehem, by His disciples on the Sea of Galilee, by a blind man to whom He had given sight ; He is related to have worked miracles that are only possible to divine power—the stilling of the storm, the multiplication and therefore creation of loaves of bread ; to have pronounced forgiveness of sins, and when it was objected that only God could so pronounce, to have offered a miracle in proof that He had the power ; His miracles as related are given a character other than that which the miracles of holy men present, being done by His word alone and in His own name ; He is described in speech and action to have exceeded the human pattern, to have been viewed with fear alike by His followers and by His gainsayers.

Such is the Gospel portraiture ; such the Gospel story of events and circumstances. You may make your selection among the materials supplied you, choosing according to your judgment between the authentic fact and the literary accompaniment ; you may construct by such critical discrimination a sufficient and acceptable image of the actual Jesus ; you may at any rate divest His character and life of some

deforming figments of a credulous and unintelligent age; you may give your allegiance and devotion with better knowledge, with a surer probability, looking back through the vista of years.

But the Jesus of your critical exegesis is not the Jesus of the Evangelical writers nor of the age in which they wrote, admittedly not; the variation may not be material, but variation there conspicuously is. Not "He that cometh to Me and hateth not his father and mother, cannot be My disciple." Not "if you believe not in Me, you shall die in your sins." Not "cast him into the exterior darkness, him that hath not on the wedding garment; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." You admit it; all that style you grant that you reject. Not thus a devotion, to the sacrifice of all human ties, absolute and entire, as only God may exact; not unbelief in Jesus the sin above all other sins because it is unbelief in God; not those alone to be of the sodality of heaven who have washed their robes and made them white in the Blood of the Lamb. The creed of human choice may be imagined truer and worthier, as knowledge advances and the idea of goodness and of God is purer, higher, more accordant with reason and moral sense. It is not the

creed, it takes exception against the creed, of the age in which the Gospels were written and of the disciples of Jesus who wrote them. Must you not, on your own representation, agree that it does ?

CHAPTER III

THE SON OF GOD

MODERN believers hesitate over the naked affirmation that Jesus is God. The hesitation is a recent development. It did not belong to the sixteenth century; the first Reformers would name Christ God as readily as did St. Ignatius or St. Justin; the same readiness continued through succeeding generations till the time of our grandfathers. But in our own time a change has come about. Thus the Abbé Picard (*Chrétien ou Agnostique*, Part II. chap. ii. p. 427, Authorised English Translation) expresses astonishment that "men can still be found, at the present day, to regard the preaching of the Divinity of Jesus as a personal offence to them." The hesitation is not confined to those apart from Rome. The Abbé proceeds: "Even after the fact of immense importance, that the Church has overcome all obstacles now for nineteen centuries, we [Catholics] have still difficulty in accepting the Christian mystery with a full and entire faith. Even we who possess the truth,

are not always courageous enough to speak of our Lord's Divinity with all candour and fearlessness even before persons who have the same faith as ourselves."

It is allowed, unavoidably, that Jesus calls Himself the Son of God. But His Being is intrinsically mysterious, and what the meaning of the appellation may precisely be, lies beyond the human intelligence to discriminate; at any rate it is for the consideration of the exegetist alone, and the ordinary Christian repeats his Credo, "I believe in God the Father Almighty, and in Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord," and is not asked to add a word more. It cannot be admitted, Jesus calling Himself the Son of God, to be the same as if He had declared Himself to be God.

The distinction so drawn must be kept in view whenever any one proposes at the present day to establish the Divinity of Jesus as being taught in Holy Scripture. Against his opponents the Abbé Picard makes no way—and is evidently unaware of it—by his numerous quotations of texts of Scripture in which Jesus is called the Son of God, as though it were the same as His being called God. At least the bare quotation does not suffice; the connection and implication of each reference needs to be ascertained and

proved. The misunderstanding unfortunately is frequent in orthodox apologetic.

“Sons of God,” in the plural, is a name given in Holy Scripture to many beings—to angels: “The morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy” (Job xxxviii. 7); to the chosen people of Israel: “Ye are the sons of the living God” (Hos. i. 10); to Christians: “Beloved, now are we the sons of God” (1 John iii. 2, etc.). Among the beatitudes of the Sermon on the Mount we have “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God” (Matt. v. 9). We need not dwell upon these usages further than to notice that the name has such more general sense. In the singular the name is not so employed; as applied to Jesus, it will be conceded to distinguish Him from others, to mean that He is the Son of God in some proper and distinguishing sense.

First, it must be clear that Jesus did give Himself the name. He allows before His Jewish objectors that He does so: “Say ye, Thou blasphemest, *because I said*, I am the Son of God?” (John x. 36). When the High Priest interrogated Him, “Art Thou Christ, the Son of God?” Jesus assented: “As thou sayest” (Matt. xxvi. 63, 64). He asked of the blind man whom He had cured, “Dost thou believe

in the Son of God ? ” (John ix. 35). He spoke of Himself as “ the Son,” when by the connection Son of God must be meant (Matt. xi. 27 ; John v. 19, etc.). The name is not only given Him, He so names Himself in the Gospel narrative. That first is to be said. Is it so ? Is it fully and unreservedly acknowledged to be so ? No need to recur to that point in the subsequent argument ? Let the opposer carefully take note and remember that so much is settled here and now, not to be gone back upon.

“ Son of God ” is said to be among the Jews a title of the Messiah. Thus, in the High Priest’s interrogatory just quoted, “ Christ the Son of God ” is one expression, and the celebrated confession of St. Peter at Cæsarea, as recorded by St. Matthew (xvi. 16), “ Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God,” * becomes in St. Mark’s Gospel (viii. 29) merely “ Thou art Christ.” † St. Martha (John xi. 27) confesses : “ I believe that Thou art Christ, the Son of God, who should come into the world ” ; that is obviously, “ I believe that Thou art the expected Messiah.”

* “ The *living* God ” marks no particular distinction, as appears by the quotation from Hosea just before.

† St. Mark’s Gospel is said by early authorities to have been written by direction of St. Peter, who will not allow his confession to be made much of.

But we require to know what the Jews understood by this title being given to the Messiah as a special designation. Before Jesus existed to receive the name, long before He was born, it would appear that a Son of God was acknowledged in the theology of the Old Testament, with evidently a divine character attaching to Him. When Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego are seen walking in the midst of the fiery furnace, King Nebuchadnezzar is astonished and says (Dan. iii. 25, [92]): "Lo! I see four men, and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God." In the second Psalm—a Messianic Psalm—we have (vv. 11, 12), "Serve the Lord with fear; Kiss the Son, lest He be angry," which surely gives to the Son a divine awe.

This connotation is reproduced in the New Testament when the Name is employed on solemn occasion and with serious reference. But, before bringing forward examples of this occurring, it should first be noticed that Jesus is called in some connections not simply Son of God, but, with distinguishing addition, "the only-begotten Son." Either word of the prefix is significant. If Jesus is the *only* Son, He must be Son in a sense in which none other is, not as angels or human beings, not as in the texts first quoted in the chapter. How the sense differs

is clearly defined to be that Jesus is a Son *begotten*, a true Son, as sons are called in human relationship; whereas we others are sons of God analogically, as being His creation or as by His adoption—"God having predestinated us into the adoption of sons through Jesus Christ" (Eph. i. 5). "The only-begotten Son of God" seems to express more than any Messianic title. St. John at the beginning of His Gospel (i. 18) writes of Jesus as the "only-begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father." Clearly actual relationship, not office, is signified.

The expression occurs also in the Epistles. The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews (i. 5) quotes as applying to Jesus the verse of the second Psalm, "Thou art My Son, to-day have I begotten Thee." St. John has (1 John iv. 9), "Herein was manifested the love of God towards us, that God sent His *only-begotten* Son into the world." St. Paul writes (Rom. viii. 3), "God sending *His own* Son" (τὸν ἑαυτοῦ υἱόν), and (ver. 32), "God who spared not His *proper* Son" (τοῦ ἰδίου υἱοῦ). Either wording is in effect the same as "the only-begotten Son" of St. John's expression. The Jews are recorded (John v. 18) to have sought to put Jesus to death because He said that God was His "proper Father" (πατέρα ἰδίου), and to claim to be the proper Son

of God they consider blasphemy; as it would not be to take the name of Messiah—unless, of course, the Messiah is a Divine Person, and *as such* has “Son of God” for His title.

The notion of the name of Son of God being a Messianic title will not satisfy the record of the bestowal of the name upon Jesus and of His claiming for Himself the name. At the baptism of Jesus a voice from heaven is heard, “This is My beloved Son,” and at the Transfiguration the same voice. That record on both occasions is found in all the three Synoptic Gospels. Moreover, to establish still further the record of the Transfiguration, St. Peter, who was present, testifies, “We heard this voice come from heaven, being with Him in the Mount” (2 Peter i. 18). In Col. i. 13, “The Son of His love” is “His beloved Son” in the Hebrew mode of expression. The title of Messiah is “Son of God”; it is not “My beloved Son.” *That* Sonship is expressed in the parable of the owner of the vineyard, who sent his “beloved” son to the cultivators, saying, “They will reverence my son,” and the cultivators said one to another, “This is the heir” (Luke xx. 13, 14). Or in the description of the son who “abideth ever in the house,” and “if he make any free, they are free indeed” (John viii. 35, 36). Jesus

names Himself Son, and adds, "The Father loveth the Son" (v. 20).

Whether Messianic title or expression of a personal relation, "Son of God" in the New Testament connotes a divine Personality, as belonged to the conception (above, p. 31) in the Old Testament also. When the High Priest interrogates Jesus, the words "Christ the Son of God" make but one expression, as noticed a few pages back. Concurrently, it is clear that such Messianic title was understood to imply a divine Personality, since Jesus is charged with blasphemy on His acknowledging that He claimed the title. St. Peter, at Cæsarea Philippi, declaring Jesus to be "Christ the Son of the living God," and intending that He was the Messiah, still must have the same idea of the meaning that the High Priest had. Jesus declared that Peter could not have obtained his belief except by a divine revelation. That must be his belief in Jesus not as Messiah alone, but going further to a divine attribution. For belief in Jesus as the Messiah is professed quite at the beginning and is the motive of originally following Him (John i. 41), nothing extraordinary or of exceptional inspiration.

In the narrative of the Annunciation that St. Luke gives, "the Sanctity" (*τὸ ἅγιον*) that

is to be born of Mary shall, it is said, be called the Son of God because the Holy Ghost will come upon her and the power of the Most High will overshadow her, and her Child will have no human father. The reference is primarily to the conception and child-bearing of Mary ("Behold! thou shalt conceive in thy womb and shalt bring forth a Son," Luke i. 31). If the Child of Mary being called Son of God means His being the Messiah, it is still the meaning that He is "the proper Son" of God and God is His "proper Father," and the name attaches to the Messiah, we discover, as being such Son. St. Paul writes to the Corinthians (2 Cor. i. 19) of "the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you." It is not an added title but a personal reference; the Son of God was preached when Jesus was preached, because one and the same Person is referred to; "the Son of God, that is to say, Jesus Christ."

St. John describes the design of his Gospel to be, a design indeed common to the other three Evangelists also, St. Mark, *e.g.*, writing "the Gospel of Jesus Christ the Son of God" (Mark i. 1), that his readers "may believe that Jesus is Christ the Son of God." We may discover accordingly from his Gospel what was the implication of the Messianic title ("Christ")

being the same as "Messiah") as understood by the first Christians, or at any rate as understood by the Fourth Evangelist and accepted by the first Christians in the sense of his defining.

In the Fourth Gospel, then, Jesus is the Word incarnate, the Word who was with God and who was God. He is described as being frequently accused by the Jews of blasphemy, because making Himself to be God by calling Himself the Son of God, because declaring God to be His proper Father in another sense than that in which God is Father of mankind, because thus "making Himself equal to God," because declaring His own being to have origin from eternity—"before Abraham was born," because saying, "I and my Father are one entity" (*ἐν ἑσμέν*). It was thus unnecessary to repeat—St. John leaves untold things that are common knowledge (*e.g.* xi. 2) and addresses himself rather to introduce additional details within his personal knowledge—what all three Synoptics had already told, how before the High Priest Jesus had declared Himself to be the Son of God (Matt. xxvi. 63) and had quoted as applying to Himself (*ib.*) the words of the vision of Daniel, "Hereafter ye shall see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power and coming in the clouds of heaven," whereupon the

High Priest adjudged Him to have spoken blasphemy, and the Sanhedrim pronounced Him guilty of death and spat upon Him.

Such we discover to be the meaning of the name of "Son of God," as Jesus (according to the Fourth Evangelist) gave it to Himself, and as He was accused by others of giving it. No mere expression of a closer feeling of relationship to God, of filial love and obedience, of piety greater than any other before Him had evinced; as if He would teach us first by His example, that we might partake of His spirit and have God for our Father as He had been the Father of Jesus, according to the word of Jesus on the eve of His passion: "I am going to My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God." *That* will not serve;—in *that* the Jews would see nothing amiss; *that* sonship they asserted for themselves: "We are not born of fornication, one is our Father, even God." And the different meaning, which the Jews declare to be blasphemy, Jesus does not repudiate but accepts; so the Evangelist relates. The Evangelist makes Jesus to be the Son of God, and tells what Jesus meant the name to be and what those present understood Him to mean by the name. The Unitarian cannot pass it over as a mere title of office, without ignoring the Fourth Evangelist, without

ignoring also the description of the condemnation of Jesus before the Sanhedrim that is given by the other three.

When the usage of Holy Scripture is thus particularly exhibited, appeal may be addressed to fair and honest investigators, whether there is any great difference made by Jesus being called the Son of God instead of being called God. Jesus conjoins the name of the Son with those of the Father and of the Holy Ghost: "Go ye and evangelise all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost" (Matt. xxviii. 19). Two are undeniably names of Deity; can the intervening third be other than a name of Deity too? The Son of God exists in the tri-unity of the Divine Being, prior to and independent of the coming of Christ into the world. Jesus is the Son of God not in His mission, but in His eternal personality. He is not called God but Son of God, because it is as being the Son that He is God, and He is not God otherwise. Such is the conclusion to be drawn from the formula of Christian Baptism. There is no doubt about it, about the inclusion of the Son. Christians "were baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus" (Acts viii. 16; *cf.* x. 48).

The form of Apostolic benediction was "The

grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you " (2 Cor. xiii. 14)—again in the name of the Three. From the earliest age the Church says "In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost" in every consecration, and offers "Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost." We need not find texts of Holy Scripture that directly name Jesus God, or if we find any such, we may add to them those that name Him Son of God, as testifying to the belief of the first disciples in the Divinity of Jesus and as exhibiting that doctrine in the language of the New Testament.

In St. John's Gospel Jesus is made frequently to speak of Himself as simply "the Son"—in His relation to God whom He names His Father. "The Son can do nothing of Himself, only what He seeth the Father do; the Father loveth the Son and showeth Him what He doeth Himself" (John v. 19, 20). If Jesus so speaks as being the Messiah, meaning to say, "I am the Messiah and the Son of God and therefore"—still it expresses a relation He claims to hold towards God, a relation of Sonship intimate and extraordinary, giving to the title its meaning and application. "The Son" occurs also in the Epistles of St. John: "The Father hath sent

the Son to be the Saviour of the world" (1, iv. 14); "Every one who denieth the Son, neither hath he the Father" (1, ii. 23); "He who abideth in the doctrine of Christ, hath both the Father and the Son" (2, 9). Also in the Epistle to the Hebrews (i. 8), very remarkably: "He (God) saith to the Son, Thy Throne, O God, is for ever and ever"—a quotation from the 45th [44th] Psalm. And then, in continuation, from the 102nd Psalm: "Thou, Lord, in the beginning didst lay the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of Thy hands; they shall perish, but Thou endurest; they all shall grow old as a garment, and as a vesture shalt Thou change them, and they shall be changed; but Thou art the self-same, and Thy years shall not fail." First "the Son" is addressed as God, and then the eternity of God is ascribed to Him as contrasted with the perishing nature of created things. Who could deny the language of the 45th [44th] Psalm to be descriptive of God and inconceivably of anything but Him? Who can deny that the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews applies that language to Jesus? He may so apply it illegitimately, He may pervert the sense of the Psalmist, and we may disregard what he writes. But he writes it, and that is what alone concerns the argument.

CHAPTER IV

THE SON OF MAN

It has been shown that Jesus, as reported in the Gospels, called Himself the Son of God. Also, and more commonly, in the Gospels He is found to call Himself the Son of Man. What does the name mean? We must allow it to be possibly a Hebraism, and "Son of Man" to mean "man" and nothing more. Thus (Job xxv. 6), "Man that is a worm and the son of man that is a worm"; and (Ps. viii. 4), "What is man that Thou art mindful of him, or the son of man that Thou regardest him?" Very frequently in his prophecies Ezekiel has himself so addressed: "Son of man, set thy face toward the mountains of Israel and prophesy to them" (vi. 2, etc.). It is not, however, with any humble implication, as in the above quotations, that Jesus gives Himself the name. The Son of Man bears poverty and privation—"the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head." But it is by way of contrast, not of congruity. That Jesus should so fare, and through it all should be the *Son* of Man!

For the name is, equally with that of Son of God, a name of the Messiah, and Jesus applies it to Himself as having that sense. Unmistakeably on the occasion when the High Priest interrogated Jesus, "Art Thou the Son of God?" and Jesus answered "As thou sayest," and proceeded, "Hereafter shall ye see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power and coming in the clouds of heaven," Jesus agrees that He is the Son of God, and in the same breath refers to Himself as the Son of Man. The usage of that occasion being recognised, further light is found again to be thrown on the confession of St. Peter at Cæsarea. To begin at the beginning, Jesus had asked, "Whom do men say that the Son of Man is?"—meaning, as we are to understand, "What do people say of Me, being, as I am, the Messiah?" When the disciples have, in reply, told Him what is said, Jesus puts the question again as concerning them, whom do they say He is. St. Peter cannot then answer, as in St. Mark's sequel, merely, "Thou art Christ," meaning, "For our part we say that Thou art the Messiah, as Thou namest Thyself," which would be nothing of further consequence and might even sound cold; which would not, at any rate, call forth the special commendation of Jesus and be the occasion of His promise to

Peter and prophecy. But St. Peter answers, "Thou art Christ the Son of Man and, moreover, Christ the Son of the living God." "Son of the living God" makes a real addition, and intends a true and proper Deity, as has been already argued (above, p. 34). "Son of God" and "Son of Man" on this occasion also occur together and appear as alternative names.

Jesus preferred to call Himself Son of Man rather than Son of God, as asserting the reality of His human nature, which He foreknew would be later disallowed (as in the Apollinarian and Nestorian, or from the very first in the Gnostic, heresies). He was a Man like other men, except for being sinless (Heb. iv. 15); He is not ashamed to call men His brethren (ii. 11)—"Who is My mother, and who are My brethren? And He stretched His hand toward His disciples and said, Behold My mother and My brethren" (Matt. xii. 48, 49).^{*} Nevertheless the name always expresses

^{*} The continuation—"Whoever shall do the will of My Father in heaven, is my brother and sister and mother"—presents an unwelcome difficulty to those who deny the virgin birth of Jesus. For it appears that Jesus has no father to whom any disciple could be equivalent, as he or she could be to brother and sister and mother. The older women can be as His mother, but not the older men as His father; they must still be brothers only. (Contrast the full distinctions of age and sex as expressed in 1 Tim. v. 1, 2.) The father of Jesus is "My Father in heaven" (Matt. xviii. 10, etc.).

the Messiah, whether for Jesus in using it or for those standing by. Thus, when Jesus declares that "the Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath, so that the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath" (Mark ii. 27, 28), and the speech is hailed by modern interpreters as approving a "liberal" disregard of religious observance, there appears to be miscomprehension. The Son of Man named is not Jesus as one of other men, but Jesus as the Messiah, whose designation that is; He is the representative of the human race, the second Adam, and so Lord of all things that are ordained for human service, and among them the Sabbath, to judge and to dispense from obligation. It is not meant that men generally are free to determine for themselves; Jesus did not come to abolish the law of keeping the Sabbath, but to ratify it (Matt. v. 17).

The Son of Man was already in Jewish tradition a Divine Person, at any rate not a mortal man as others are. The prophet Daniel has (vii. 13): "I saw in the night visions, and behold! one like unto the Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven and came to the Ancient of Days, and there was given him dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve

him ; his dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away, and his kingdom shall not be destroyed." Jesus gives Himself the name with full consciousness of such tradition. For before the High Priest He applies the language of Daniel to His own coming in the clouds (above, p. 42). But now the ascription in the prophecy to the Son of Man of an everlasting kingdom and universal dominion is the same ascription that is later (ver. 27) made to "the Most High." The reference is parallel with that which has been already instanced (above, p. 31) of an earlier chapter of Daniel, paralleled in awe and mystery, and in its disclosure of the theology of the Captivity. "Son of Man" and "Son of God" appear as alternative names in the descriptions of Daniel's narration, as they are alternative in the Messianic expectation of the time of Christ.

Jesus speaks of Himself under the former title in His most solemn and significant discourse, in His clearest assertion of divine authority. He is the Son of Man in His Second Advent : "Then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven" (Matt. xxiv. 30) ; "When the Son of Man cometh, will He find faith on the earth ?" (Luke xviii. 8). And in

His judging the world : “ The Son of Man shall send His angels and shall gather out of His kingdom all things that offend and the doers of iniquity, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire ” (Matt. xiii. 41) ; “ The Father hath given Him authority to execute judgment, because He is the Son of Man ” (John v. 27). And when He is “ raised up from the earth ” (viii. 28, xii. 32). The Jews ask antagonistically and scornfully, “ Who is this Son of Man, that is so raised up ? ” With Messianic reference. For their words were : “ We have heard in the Law * that Messiah abideth ever.” “ Does Jesus, then (they would ask), say that He is the Son of Man, the Messiah ? ” So that He would not die but be raised up † according to ancient prophecy ? In this reference again “ the Son of Man ” is taken to mean the Messiah. To His disciples Jesus had before explained that “ the Son of Man shall be betrayed into the hands of men, and they shall kill Him, and the third day He shall be raised again ” (Matt. xvii. 22, etc.).

* A loose expression for the Old Testament Scriptures, which are commonly styled “ the Law and the Prophets ” (Matt. vii. 12, etc.). It is difficult to identify any such saying in the Pentateuch.

† The Jews evidently mistook the meaning of being raised up from the earth and imagined it to refer to an assumption. Hence the Evangelist thinks well to insert the explanation of xii. 33.

Taking together the various occasions and connections in which Jesus spoke of Himself as the Son of Man, it would seem that He therewith gave Himself a divine character hardly less expressly than on the occasions when He called Himself the Son of God instead. Except only for the difference—which is certainly of moment—that in the one case the Divinity needs to be deduced, while in the other the Divinity is contained in the expression, and the explanation required of those who dispute it would be to find the meaning other.

It is wilful evasion when Unitarians argue that Jesus speaks of Himself as Son of Man alone and does not speak of Himself as Son of God (“only in the Fourth Gospel does He give Himself the latter name”) * because He is not God but man, and if the “Son of Man” is a

* The design of the Fourth Gospel, we are admonished, as the writer with simple candour confesses, is to instil the belief that Jesus is the Son of God (xx. 31), and he may accordingly introduce the name in any suitable connection. The single occasion on which the Synoptics record Jesus to have called Himself “the Son” (Matt. xi. 27; Luke x. 22) is distinguished by critics as recalling the Johannine manner, and falls under suspicion. So Unitarians explain the case. They brush aside instances of Synoptic Evangelists themselves naming Jesus Son of God (Mark i. 1), or of others so naming Him in their account (Matt. iv. 3; Luke i. 35). This, they argue, is the very fault and falsity that Jesus would guard against in the future recollection and report of Him.

Messianic title and Jesus means Himself to be the Messiah, He chooses for Himself that title, and not the other title of "Son of God," expressly in order to preclude His being made into a divine personage. The Unitarian pretension cannot be allowed any sort of consideration, and should be evidently a mere mirage, even to the persons themselves who direct our attention to it. For under the name of Son of Man Jesus speaks of His possessing divine supereminence and power, as, for example, in His judging the world; He assents to the High Priest naming Him Son of God, and proceeds to foretell His appearance on the clouds of heaven as Son of Man. Son of God and Son of Man are the same. The one title is not in the language of Jesus lower than the other.

It is not irrelevant to have it clearly evident to our perception that the Evangelists, at any rate in their writing, intended no depreciation of Himself on the part of Jesus when He called Himself Son of Man; and we should certainly notice that the primitive age, which confessed the Divinity of Jesus, took no exception against the Gospel account, nor imagined the Divinity, of which they had been otherwise taught, to be compromised by the frequent appearance in the Gospels of the name of the Son of Man. St.

Ignatius, for instance, who named Jesus his God, is not said to have found any defect in the Synoptic Gospels, but to have accepted them as being Scripture.

In the foregoing argument all through, the name of Unitarian has been employed to denote such as fail to acknowledge the Divinity of Jesus. It has been employed not as distinguishing a particular sect, but as expressing a theological distinction. So Gibbon (*Decline and Fall*, chap. li.): "The first principle of reason and revelation was confirmed by the voice of Mahomet; his proselytes, from India to Morocco, are distinguished by the name of *Unitarians*." The explanation applies generally in the sequel here.

CHAPTER V

CHRIST IS LORD

It is not disputed that the primitive age confessed the Divinity of Jesus. But the New Testament is said not to have the Divinity among its evidences. Jesus is not anywhere in the New Testament—such is the common imagination—directly named God. To continue, then, the marshalling of the indirect proof discoverable.

His disciples were accustomed to address Jesus as “Lord.” They addressed Him also as “Master” (διδάσκαλος), that is to say, “Rabbi,”* but the recorded occasions (Mark iv. 38 ; ix. 38 ; x. 35) are not many in the Evangelic narrative. Others besides His disciples call Him “Lord” (John iv. 49) and “Master” (διδάσκαλος, Matt. xxii. 16), or “Rabbi” (John vi. 25).

I. “Lord” (κύριος) appears to be an ordinary form of courteous address. It is used by St. Mary Magdalene (xx. 15) in addressing Jesus

* St. John writes (i. 38) that “Master” is the translation of “Rabbi.” St. Luke (viii. 24 ; ix. 49) translates by ἐπιστάτης instead of διδάσκαλος.

when He appeared to her at the sepulchre after His resurrection and she supposed Him to be the garden-keeper; also by some Greeks in addressing St. Philip (xii. 21); also a nobleman of Capernaum (iv. 49) so addressed Jesus. On the other hand the *title* of "Lord" is given to Cæsar (Acts xxv. 26), as also to the rich man in the parable of the Unjust Steward (Luke xvi. 3, etc.).

II. There seems, then, to be a difference between the use in address and the use in *description of the person*, and this will hold when Jesus is so described. As when it is said (Luke xix. 8) that Zacchæus stood forth and said unto "the Lord." St. Luke writes (xxiv. 3) of "the body of the Lord Jesus." We have (Matt. xxviii. 6) "the place where the Lord lay," and (Mark xvi. 19) it is testified that "the Lord Jesus, after He had spoken to them, was taken up into heaven." In Acts xx. 35, St. Paul bids his hearers to "remember the words of the Lord Jesus," and the Epistle to the Hebrews (ii. 3) inquires, "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation, which had its beginning in being spoken by the Lord?" *

* Correspondingly in English usage we may *address* any one as "Sir" from the King to the commonest, but only *speak* of any one as "Sir" who holds the rank of Knighthood.

Jesus, however, says (John xiii. 13), "Ye call Me Master and Lord, and ye say well, for so I am." It is not merely that He may rightly be addressed as Lord ("Ye call Me Lord"), but He claims to be Lord ("so I am"), and His disciples, as in the examples just given, and as commonly in the Epistles, speak of *Him* as "the Lord." We observe that by the Evangelists His disciples are made to address Him as "Lord," and only rarely as "Master." The Evangelists may be presumed to have an intention in preferring the former mode of address in their record of the speeches made, and what that intention was we should wish to discover, and further if it could be explained to us how His disciples came to call Jesus "Lord" instead of the customary "Rabbi," and what was the suggestion in so addressing Him. The Catholic account is, then, submitted, and its Scriptural substantiation is very strong—as follows.

III. In the Septuagint Version of the Old Testament, κύριος (Lord) is the Greek equivalent of Jehovah, and Jehovah Elohim (the Lord God) becomes κύριος ὁ θεός. The rendering is the same in the Greek of the New Testament: "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel" (Luke i. 68); "Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts"

(1 Peter iii. 15)—*κύριος ὁ θεός* in both places. Among the Jews, the sacred Tetragrammaton, Jehovah, may not be uttered, and whenever it occurred in Scripture, it was *read* “Adonai” (Lord). “The Lord” also may stand for God, as, *e.g.* in Is. vi. 1, “I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne.” When meaning God, the form Adonai (Lord) is always used, and it is never used for any other than God. As meaning others, the form is Adon (Lord). In Greek, however, there is no such distinction; *κύριος* must stand equally for Adon and for Adonai.

Thus, in Psalm cx. [cix.] 1, “The Lord (Jehovah) said to my Lord (Adon),” becomes *ὁ κύριος τῷ κυρίῳ μου* in Mark xii. 36. This text Jesus is represented by St. Mark to quote as proof that Messiah, Christ, whom David calls his lord, cannot be his son. David so writes “in the Holy Ghost,” that is to say, by divine inspiration. And the Psalm continues, “The Lord said to my lord, Sit thou on My right hand.” For those who believe Jesus to be Christ, He is Lord and He sits on the right hand of God. St. Peter (Acts ii. 34), quoting from the Psalm from which Jesus quoted, declares its language to be fulfilled by the resurrection and ascension of Jesus, and concludes, “Let the house of Israel know assuredly that God hath

made both Lord and Christ this Jesus whom ye crucified." As Jesus is Christ, so God has made Him Lord. He is given the name which, but little altered in form, is allowed to be substitute for the unutterable name of God !

This higher use and connotation may have to do with Jesus being called Lord by His disciples in their *addressing* Him, as well as with the Evangelists in their recollection preferring that manner. Still more probably, almost certainly, there is reference to the higher signification when Jesus is *spoken of* as Lord.

The name of Lord is given to Jesus by the Evangelists in their narratives prior to and independently of His being *addressed* or being *spoken of*, whether it is by those mentioned in the narratives or by the Evangelists in writing of Him ; before the time has come for Him to be spoken to or to be spoken of in His personal character as living in the world of humanity. At the Visitation St. Elizabeth says to the chosen Virgin-Mother, " Whence is this to me, that the Mother of my Lord should come to me ? " (Luke i. 43). St. Elizabeth adds : " Blessed is she who believed, for there shall be a fulfilment of the things spoken to her from the Lord "—when it is obviously God who is intended. Can " Lord " mean God and not mean God in

the same breath? It follows that when the Mother of Jesus is called "the mother of my Lord," Jesus is meant to be God. There is no evading that being the intention of Elizabeth and being present to the mind of the Evangelist in recording her speech.

Similarly, at the birth of Jesus (ii. 9) "an angel of the Lord appeared to them (the shepherds), and the glory of the Lord shone round about them"—obviously an angel of God and the glory of God. And the angel says, "To-day was born to you a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord." The meaning must be "who is Christ and who is God." This, also, occurring at a time before any one had yet called Jesus Lord in His intercourse with others whom He came amongst. Jesus is not Lord in the Gospels because His disciples so call Him, but His disciples so call Him because He is so.

Also when at the Presentation in the Temple the prophetess Anna is said by St. Luke (ii. 38) to have "confessed to the Lord and spoken of Him to all that looked for redemption in Israel," it must be of the Babe that she "speaks," and there is at least a grammatical awkwardness if the Babe is not also the Lord to whom she "confesses." Does not the Evangelist intend that to be his meaning?

In the Epistles Jesus is commonly "Lord"; He is "the Lord Jesus Christ," or "the Lord Jesus" ("Our Lord," Heb. vii. 14). "Lord" only stands for God in quotations from the Old Testament. "The Lord hath sworn and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec" (Heb. vii. 21, quoting Ps. cix. [cx.] 4); "The word of the Lord abideth for ever" (1 Peter i. 25; Is. xl. 8). Otherwise God is named God everywhere, and "Lord" means Jesus. "May the Lord of peace Himself give you peace; the Lord be with you" (2 Thess. iii. 16); "Instead of your saying, If the Lord will, we shall live and do this or that" (Jas. iv. 15). "The Lord" is taken by readers to be God through unreadiness to suppose divine acts and graces to be so plentifully identified with Christ. Sometimes we are particularly told that it is Christ: "knowing that ye shall receive from the Lord the reward of the inheritance; for ye serve the Lord, even Christ" (Col. iii. 24; cf. Acts ix. 17). In the fifth chapter of the Epistle of St. James "the Lord" is Christ throughout. We have (ver. 7) "the coming of the Lord is nigh at hand," and there is no suggestion of a change of reference. St. Paul writes (Rom. xi. 34): "Who hath known the mind of the Lord?" Again (1 Cor. ii. 16) the

same, adding, " but we have the mind of Christ." Either the mind of Christ is the mind of the Lord, or, at any rate, having the mind of Christ is equivalent.

We may observe the sequence of the argument in the fourteenth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans: " He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks " (ver. 6) ; " the Lord " is God. But presently (ver. 8), " Whether we live or die, we are the Lord's ; for to this end Christ both died and rose and revived, that He might be Lord both of dead and living " ; " the Lord " is Christ. And finally (vv. 10, 11), " For we shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ " (cf. 2 Cor. v. 10) ; for it is written, " As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bend to Me and every tongue shall confess to God." It would seem that Christ is not only the Lord but also God, so that in the sixth verse, when the Lord is God, He may still be Christ.

St. Paul writes to Timothy (2 Tim. iv. 17) : " The Lord stood by me and *empowered* (ἐνεδυναμωσε) me," while in Phil. iv. 13, it was, " I can do all things through Christ who *empowereth* (ἐνδυναμοῦντι) me," and in 2 Cor. xii. 9, " I will glory in my infirmities, that the *power* (δύναμις) of Christ may rest upon me." Christ is, then, intended by " the Lord," who stood by and

empowered His Apostle, as said in the quotation from the Epistle to Timothy. But the immediate continuation there (ver. 18) is, "The Lord shall deliver me from every evil work and shall preserve me unto His heavenly kingdom, to whom be glory for ever and ever, Amen." The heavenly kingdom is the Lord's, and eternal glory is ascribed to Him, and it is discovered that the Lord is Christ. And, further, when the Ephesians are exhorted (Eph. vi. 10) to "*find power (ἐνδυναμοῦσθε)* in the Lord and in the strength of His might," we perceive by the equivalence of the expression that the rule of the Epistolary usage is retained, and that "the Lord" here again is Christ. And the immediately succeeding continuation (ver. 11) is that the Ephesians should "clothe themselves in the panoply of God."

Thus, continually in the Epistles Christ is called Lord, at the same time that the name of Lord is employed by the writers in quoting from the Old Testament as representing the Hebrew Jehovah (Adonai), and it is hardly possible that the application of the name to Christ can be without reference to the other use of it or without the writers being conscious of its divine connotation in the understanding of the Jewish mind. St. Peter, speaking at Joppa on the occasion of the baptism of Cornelius (Acts x. 36),

tells of "the Gospel of peace through Jesus Christ; He is Lord of all." St. Paul to the Philippians (Phil. ii. 10, 11) similarly declares the universal Lordship of Christ: "That at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, of those in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord."

The Epistolary writers uniformly speak of Christ as Lord. It is a name appropriated to Him, His distinguishing appellation in their faith and devotion—it might be said in their doctrinal expression. It is made a test title, dividing between believers and those outside, marking the election of God. No one can call Jesus Lord, no one can say "Lord Jesus," unless by grace and inspiration—"by the Holy Ghost" (1 Cor. xii. 3). It is on a level with the confession of St. Peter at Cæsarea that Jesus is Christ. God hath made Him "both Lord and Christ" (Acts ii. 36). Jesus is not named Lord only as the Master to whom loyalty and allegiance are due; the Lord of all, the Lord whom earth and heaven alike adore, is "the Lord Jesus" (Acts xi. 20) of the Apostolic preaching.

It does not greatly help to discover that Jesus is not named God in the New Testament. He must be allowed to be named Lord, which,

as the equivalent of Jehovah, may be one and the same, and which, apart from such use, is found to have a divine intention. There is no explaining away the multiplicity of the occasions on which Jesus is named Lord, nor the significance of the name, as represented in the analysis that has been submitted.

CHAPTER VI

DIVINE POWERS AND MODE OF BEING BELONG TO CHRIST

THE writers of the New Testament, without (if it be so insisted) actually naming Jesus as God, give a description of His existence as the Son of God and of His relation to the Father, which could not be given if regarding a finite being, and they ascribe to Jesus powers and attributes which must be divine. Supposing the writers to have at all in any sentence named Jesus God, it would hardly be possible not to consider these other sentences as intending His Divinity; supposing occasional places, in which Jesus is directly so named, to be ignored for their paucity, then, however, the constructive references, being additional and more repeatedly occurring, should demand a fresh and more particular consideration for the direct naming. It is asserted that constructive assertions of the Divinity of Jesus do repeatedly occur.

In 2 Cor. iv. 4, Christ is the image (εἰκών) of God, as also in Col. i. 15, where everything is

created "in Him and for Him; He is before all things and all things subsist in Him." Is absolute pre-existence and the sovereignty and maintaining of the universe predicable of any other than God? In Heb. i. 3, "God has spoken to us by His Son, who is the Effulgence (*ἀπαύγασμα*) of His glory and the Expression (*χαρακτήρ*) of His Personality,* and upholds the universe by the word of His power." The concluding predication is again to be observed and cannot be intended of any other than or co-partner with Deity. In ii. 13, continuing his quotations from the Psalms, the writer has, "I shall have trusted in Him," † the particular reference of which to Christ is not at once apparent. But in the Psalm (xviii. 2) it is, "My God, in Him will I trust." So that the meaning of the reference would be that Jesus is God! Constructively He is so named by the writer in the succeeding chapter (iii. 3, 4) where Jesus is argued to have a higher honour than could be

* The first figure of correspondence seems to be as light is both that which gives light and the light which it gives, both the flame and the illumination; the second expresses verbally the mould which is taken of the medallion for reproduction, the matrix of the coin from which the coin is struck.

† *ἔσομαι πεποιθώς*. In classic Greek the regular future perfect, but in the Hellenistic possibly not different from *πείσομαι*, "I will trust."

claimed for Moses, "inasmuch as he who built (κατασκεύασας) the house has the higher honour." Then follows immediately, "Every house is built (κατασκευάζεται) by somebody; now He who built everything is God." How can it possibly be imagined that Jesus is not here meant to be God? The climax of identification is reached in Phil. ii. 6, where a similar expression occurs to that of the image (εἰκὼν): "Christ Jesus, existing in the form of God (ἐν μορφῇ Θεοῦ), thought it no robbery that He should be equal to God" (ἴσα Θεῷ, cf. John v. 18). Surely God has no equal except God.

Christ is represented in the Gospels as claiming for Himself a peculiar intimacy with God, amounting to, or even expressly asserting, an identity of Being. In his introduction St. John wrote: "None hath ever seen God; the Only-begotten Son told* of Him." Christ explains the manner of His telling of God and the particular assurance of it: "He who is from God, He hath seen the Father" (vi. 46). As again (Matt. xi. 27): "None knoweth the Father except the Son." And (John viii. 55), in reproof of the unbelieving Jews: "Ye have not

* ἐξηγήσατο. The word occurs also in Luke xxiv. 35, when the two disciples "told" the Eleven of their experience on the road to Emmaus.

known God, but I know Him." The knowledge of God that Christ possesses is through an essential identity of being and character. "He who beholdeth Me, beholdeth Him who sent Me" (xii. 45); "He who hath seen Me, hath seen the Father" (xiv. 9). And then, in the same saying, as explaining how that should be (ver. 11): "I am in the Father and the Father in Me." It might, taking these passages by themselves, be imagined that Jesus meant Himself actually to be the Father; it must be that the impassable gulf between the finite and infinite does not exist for Him; even, it would seem, that He is with God and Himself God (i. 1); and the Evangelist is aware of such being the doctrine which the sentences convey.

It is beyond dispute that Jesus, as the Evangelists report Him, asserted for Himself a pre-existence, declared Himself to have been in existence before His birth in Bethlehem. He is from God and "hath seen the Father" (John vi. 46). He comes from Heaven, "where He was before." The Jews objected: "Is not this Jesus the Son of Joseph? How saith He then, I came down from heaven?" (ver. 42). If that saying offends them, the answer of Jesus is: "What if ye shall see the Son of Man ascend up where He was before?" (ver. 62). The two

marvels, of the Incarnation and of the Ascension, are brought together in the saying of Jesus before His Passion: "I came forth from the Father and came into the world; again I leave the world and go to the Father"; and His disciples say to Him, "Now speakest Thou plainly," and they declare, "By this we believe that Thou camest forth from God" (xvi. 28-30). The *κένωσις* ("emptying") of Phil. ii. 5-8 cannot but express the same; Jesus was *first* "in the form of God" before He took on Himself the form of man.

Jesus was "before Abraham was born" (John viii. 58)—a long period of time, which the Jews, when He so spoke of Himself, took to imply a divine pre-existence, and they made ready to stone Him for blasphemy. The quotation from the Psalm in Heb. i. 10, which is applied to Jesus, declares Him to have "in the beginning" laid the foundation of the world, and frequently by the Epistolary writers He is named the Creator. The Word existed "in the beginning" (John i. 1). "Before the foundation of the world" Jesus says that God loved Him (xvii. 24). It is an eternal pre-existence, existence before space and time, when there was only God. Should not that be the meaning?

Jesus in the Gospel has power over the

natural world ; His miracles are such as have not been recorded of any other. Moses caused the waters of the Red Sea to divide and the children of Israel crossed *on dry land* ; Jesus walked *on the water* of the Lake of Galilee. St. Paul obtained the safety of all in the boat with him when shipwrecked off Malta ; Jesus did otherwise for His disciples crossing the lake in the raging storm—He spoke and commanded the elements, “ Peace, be still.” “ What manner of man,” said they, “ is this, that the winds and the storm obey Him ? ” Surely again no man, but God.

According to the science of our time, the matter in the universe remains always constant in amount ; it is never destroyed or freshly created ; it only changes its form. If one single atom, it is said, were added to the universe, it would mean the collapse and ruin of the whole.* That may or may not be so. But in the miracle of the Multiplication of the Loaves, five loaves feeding 5,000 men “ besides women and children,” there is certainly creation of new matter. St. Mark, in relating how the disciples were

* See the ingenious argument of *The Unseen Universe*, by Tait and Thomson, that unless there is another than the visible world the waste of nerve and brain, which may sometimes live in action or production, must at other times be lost energy in the universe.

“astonished” by Jesus walking on the water, adds (Mark vi. 52) that “they did not understand the miracle of the loaves,” that is to say, they did not consider and perceive that it was actual creation. According to our science, that could only be because He who so wrought was Sustainer of the material universe as well as Creator of fresh matter, because Jesus was God.

Less evidently, but quite as really to scientific rendering, there is fresh creation in the miracle of Cana, which St. John calls “the beginning of miracles” worked by Jesus, and which he introduces into his narrative, differing therein from the other three Evangelists, who leave it out.* To make water into wine, there must be *added* the constituents of the grape, which are not in a natural manner within reach of Jesus. By the miracle Jesus “manifested forth His glory” (John ii. 11) as creator out of nothing. The motive of St. John in recording the miracle is the general motive of his Gospel, that the Divinity of Jesus may be established.

Jesus has power over evil spirits. “With authority He commandeth the unclean spirits and they obey Him” (Mark i. 27). He does not make use of exorcism; He does not lay His

* Probably owing to the Blessed Virgin being concerned in it. St. John writes after her death.

hands upon those possessed; He gives His spoken order: "Thou deaf and dumb spirit, I order thee, come out of him" (ix. 25). The evil spirits recognise Him: "Jesus of Nazareth, art Thou come to destroy us? I know Thee who Thou art, the Holy One of God" (Luke iv. 34; for the phrase *cf.* i. 33). The devils "knew that He was Christ" (iv. 41). He imparts to others the power He possesses, to the Twelve (Matt. x. 1, etc.), to the seventy: "I give you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions and over all the power of the enemy" (Luke x. 19).*

Here we should pause to consider that the power of conveying supernatural gifts to others is more than that of exercising them personally, and that it is moreover a power without other example. Elisha is associated with Elijah, and by the association attains to similar sanctity and exercises similar graces. But these are not imparted to him consciously by Elijah, nor do we read anywhere in Holy Scripture of Saint bestowing supernatural gifts on Saint before

* Modern enlightenment discovers a lower order of intelligence to belong to the age and the writer, when "serpents and scorpions" are added among diabolic agencies, and the text therefore, it is said, does not ask for particular consideration. That is, however, immaterial to the argument in hand, which is all along concerned only with the belief of the writers, not with its quality and character.

Christ came. It is God alone who gives the graces. Jesus gives them, could not otherwise, as being God.*

Jesus is discovered to have the power and sovereignty of God without distinction or qualification. When He healed the demoniac on His descent from the Mount of Transfiguration, "all were astonished by the mighty power of God" *μεγαλειότητι τοῦ Θεοῦ*, Luke ix. 43).† So the Evangelist describes the miracle. "The mighty power of God" is the operative energy of the act of Jesus and belongs to His personality. The expression is similar when Simon Magus (Acts viii. 10) for the marvel of his sorceries was given in Samaria the name of "The Great Power of God" (*ἡ δύναμις τοῦ Θεοῦ ἡ μεγάλη*). "The Mighty Power of God" names Jesus as possessed of divine sovereignty and power. He is "the Power of God and the Wisdom of God" (1 Cor. i. 24).

* When Jesus walked on the water of the Lake of Galilee, He gave St. Peter the power to do the same. "Peter walked on the water to come to Jesus" (Matt. xiv. 29). Presently, terrified by the gale, Peter's faith failed and he began to sink. And Jesus stretched out His hand and set him on the surface again.

† In Acts xix. 27, the same word is used—"the mighty power" (*τὴν μεγαλειότητα*) of the Ephesian goddess Artemis. In 2 Peter i. 16, referring to the Transfiguration, "we being eye-witnesses *τῆς ἑκείνου μεγαλειότητος*"—however we should translate the Greek. Similarly, Heb. i. 3.

Other divine prerogatives that Jesus claims to exercise are the forgiveness of sins and the final judgment of sinners. When Jesus had said to St. Mary Magdalene, "Thy sins are forgiven thee," the Evangelist calls attention to the pronouncement being beyond human competence. "Who is this," said one to another of those who heard Him, "Who is this who forgiveth sins also?" (Luke vii. 49). So when Jesus said the same to the paralytic, the scribes and Pharisees present were shocked: "Who is this who speaketh blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God alone?" (Mark ii. 7, etc.). Jesus, it must be observed, according to the account of the Evangelist, accepts the objection and asserts His deity, so he claims, by performance of the miracle of healing the paralytic: "That ye may know that the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins"—that He hath the power that is God's alone.

God is "the Judge of all" (Heb. xii. 23). But "the Father hath given to the Son authority to execute judgment" (John v. 27). In all the Synoptics the Judgment of the Last Day is pictured by Jesus, and He represents Himself as the King before whom all are gathered and who pronounces commendation or condemns (Matt. xxv. 34, 46, etc.). "We shall all stand

before the judgment-seat of Christ " (Rom. xiv. 10 ; *cf.* 2 Cor. v. 10). If it is declared by the sacred writers that God is the Judge of all, and also declared that Christ announced that He would pronounce judgment, then the sacred writers cannot be so dull as not to be aware that they declare Jesus to make Himself God. "The Father hath given all judgment to the Son," said Jesus (John v. 23), "in order that all may honour the Son accordingly as they honour the Father." Divine honour is to be paid to Jesus, equal to and undistinguished from the honour paid to God, and it is Jesus who so declares, as witnessed by the Fourth Evangelist, "and we know that his witness is true" (xxi. 24).

The sovereignty of Christ is represented as complete and universal. So represented alike in Gospels and Epistles, on many occasions and in diversified connections. There is nothing in the universe of being, visible things or things invisible, things temporal or things eternal, that is excluded from the sovereignty of Christ. "He that cometh from Heaven is above all" (John iii. 31). "The Father loveth the Son and hath given all things into His hand" (ver. 35). The Church is "the Body of Christ" (Eph. i. 23 ; *cf.* 1 Cor. xii. 27, etc.), "the plenitude of Him who filleth all in all." Of that text of Holy Scripture

at any rate there is no question or dispute. Jesus, after His resurrection, says: "All power is given to Me in heaven and on earth" (Matt. xxviii. 18). "Christ rose again to be Lord both of dead and living" (Rom. xiv. 9). He "is on the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers being subjected to Him" (1 Peter iii. 22). He is "Lord of all" (Acts x. 37).

If Christ is thus supreme in heaven, all in heaven being subject to Him, excepting only Him who made them subject, surely the Supreme Being is God in the language of every age and every people, and Christ is therefore God, and it must be so intended, without possibility of other meaning, when such description of the dominion of Christ is given in the New Testament. If the sacred writers do not give to Jesus the name of God, they write of Him, they make Him speak of Himself, as being God. He is God in their belief as they write about Him.

CHAPTER VII

CHRIST IS GOD

How does the Unitarian deal with the additional material, recorded sayings and acts of Jesus, with the numerous texts, of the Fourth Gospel, asserting or implying the Divinity of Christ? He does not deal with them; he passes them over. For him they are all inventions, fictions. "The writer was addicted to mysticism and saw visions; he gives a colouring to events that will sustain his theological position; the simple facts of the history are transformed into the illuminated legend of devotion."

But any such view, it must be submitted, makes no difference to what the writer means. It makes no difference to what his contemporaries believed, their belief according with or reflected in his account of things. The Unitarian must deal, if he enters the field thus proposed, with the language of the Fourth Gospel. He gains little by refusing. The contention still holds. The sense, for instance, of Jesus being named the Son of God is sufficiently expressed in what are

deemed the more ingenuous narratives of the Synoptics; the divine attributes with which Jesus is credited appear also on occasion in their relating. As has been already made clear as daylight.*

Whether in Gospel or Epistle, it would seem to be proof enough, if Jesus is one with the Father (John x. 30), if He is equal to God (Phil. ii. 6); it is difficult to conceive that such expressions come short of giving Him a divine nature. But the Unitarian finds a different interpretation or leaves interpretation alone. "If any one of the sacred writers believed Jesus to be God, it is beyond possibility of chance"—so the Unitarian urges—"that no one of them should anywhere in their writings have called Him God. Inferential reasoning, discovery of implication, is not exegesis. Let it be established, not that Jesus in the New Testament is intended to be God, but that He is named to be."

Meanwhile, to declare that Jesus is not named to be God, is simply to declare what is not true. It will not do to find, as is the usual device, that there is something amiss, and to make correction of the text, to change the punctuation, or whatever else the critic may hit upon. There will be

* See Excursus III. (p. 159): "An Episode of St. Luke's Gospel."

sentences that do not admit of emendation, and the number of sentences in which emendation is tried, may suggest an uncomfortable suspicion of the opponent's prejudging the case ; " if the premises do not fit the conclusion, so much the worse for the premises."

St. Matthew, in his account of the birth of Jesus, writes that an angel reassured St. Joseph ; his wife, Mary, was with child by the Holy Ghost, and should bring forth a Son. St. Matthew, according to his custom, finds for the event a Scriptural allusion ; the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, " They shall call His name Emmanuel." The name, as translated, he adds, is " God-with-us." Jesus is never, so far as we hear, called Emmanuel. It is a Hebrew way of speaking : " They shall call His name Emmanuel," being equivalent to " He shall be Emmanuel " ; as, *e.g.* in Is. lxii. 12, referring to the holy city, " Thou shalt be called Sought-out, a city not forsaken." St. Matthew, then, declares that the Offspring of Mary " shall be God," and translates the Hebrew that he may make his meaning evident.

Special to St. Mark is that he gives his Gospel a title : " The Gospel of Jesus the Son of God." The intention has been already remarked upon (above, p. 35). Jesus is determined on the title

page to be of divine nature, and the record of His life and acts is to be read accordingly.

When St. Elizabeth greets the Blessed Virgin as "Mother of my Lord," it has been demonstrated (above, p. 55) that she must mean "Mother of my God." St. Luke, then, in his account of the birth also intends Jesus to be God, and would imagine himself to have so named Him.

St. John begins his Gospel with the doctrine of the Word, who was "with God and was God" (i. 1). Not a single atom (*οὐδὲ ἓν*) in creation was created without the Word. And he adds (ver. 14) that "the Word became flesh, and tabernacled among us," and, in fact, that Jesus was He. Here, at least, is categorical and unmistakeable assertion. If Jesus was the Word and the Word was God, Jesus is said to be God. All four Evangelists, then, in the forefront of their narratives, so that he who runs may read and he who reads may understand, declare themselves to be writing of a divine Person; the name of God is given to Jesus to preclude misconception before further progress is made.

The conclusion (except for the twenty-first chapter) of the Fourth Gospel declares its motive to be "in order that ye may believe that Jesus is Christ the Son of God" (xx. 31), and accordingly its last recorded episode is the confession

of St. Thomas on Low Sunday, when he addresses Jesus (ver. 28) as "my Lord and my God." * Here the text is assured, and there is no avoiding the sense. St. John records this instance of Jesus being named plainly and simply God, and Jesus in St. John's account is certainly so named. That cannot be denied. The incident recorded may be asserted to be fictitious. That makes no difference. Here is an instance of Jesus in the New Testament being named God, and it is accordingly false to hold that He is not anywhere so named.

Other expressions of the Fourth Gospel it might seem equally impossible to misinterpret. Jesus declares (x. 30), "I and My Father are one" (*ἐν ἑσμεν*—the neuter gender designating a unity of essence as distinguished from a unity of person), and the Jews thereupon are going to stone Him "for blasphemy, that Thou, being a man, makest Thyself God." Surely St. John in this passage does not himself take exception against the saying of Jesus, but means to exhibit Him as being not man but God; Jesus has the

* It is nothing new to point out that St. John arranges a dramatic effect in the construction of his narrative. Examples may be recognised in the final closes of viii. 58, ix. 38, x. 16, xiii. 20, xviii. 40. Who can fail to understand the literary art of the episode of the Woman taken in Adultery or of the Raising of Lazarus?

name of God assigned to Him, and the Evangelist allows the name.

On another occasion (v. 17) Jesus said, "My Father worketh and I work," and the Jews sought to have Him put to death as "making Himself equal to God." Jesus does not dispute His having so professed Himself, but repeats (ver. 19, fol.) His offence and makes it the text of a further disquisition; or, if that account is not accepted, then alternatively, the Evangelist finds occasion for appending sayings of Jesus that are consonant. The material effect is that the Jews understand Jesus to lay claim to a divine character, and that St. John records their doing so, evidently without himself disagreeing, but, just the reverse, particularly intending by his record to convey that the Deity of Jesus was revealed during His ministry. St. John would have it known that Jesus was said to be God, and would make that to be the truth of His Personality.

Perhaps the occasion of greatest awe and wonder in the Gospels, not reckoning the Resurrection and Ascension, is when Jesus on Palm Sunday among a crowd of people cried out, "Father, save Me from this hour; Father, glorify Thy name"—in view of His approaching passion and death; and when there came the

answering voice from the empty air, from the sky: "I both have glorified and will glorify again" (John xii. 28).^{*} More horribly near men never came to actually seeing God. When they heard Him audibly speak! When Jesus prays, He is answered audibly. Who, then, is Jesus? As He had promised before (viii. 18), "the Father that sent Me beareth witness of Me." It may be called the uncorroborated and theologically motivated invention of the Fourth Evangelist. But that again is immaterial to the argument proposed, which examines solely what the sacred writers meant to say. "It is no instance of Jesus being named God." But when such occurrence is related to have been, St. John at least is not a writer who would add any word more.

We should anticipate that St. John in his Epistles would echo the doctrine of his Gospel.[†]

^{*} Similar—but the publicity is absent—is when at the Baptism of Jesus, John the Baptist "heard a voice from heaven; saying, This is My beloved Son," or when at the Transfiguration the disciples present heard the same words spoken to them (Matt. iii. 17, xvii. 5, etc.). On those occasions, however, the manifestation is made to, and reported by, friendly witnesses. The other is more tremendous in occurrence and more amazing in report.

[†] Critics external to the Church question whether the author of the Gospel and of the Epistles is the same. The ideas and the style, however, are unquestionably similar, or even identical, in Gospel and Epistles, as is very well exemplified in the extract succeeding. Compare John xiv. 6, xvii. 3, etc.

He ends his First Epistle (v. 20), as he ended the Gospel, with declaration of the Divinity of Christ as culmination and parting word: "we are in Him who is the true, in His (God's) Son, Jesus Christ. He is the true God and the Eternal Life." * The main argument of the Epistle is that eternal life is in Christ (ver. 11). Thus, in the beginning (i. 2) equally as in the end, "We bear witness and proclaim to you the Eternal Life, which was with the Father (*πρὸς τὸν Πατέρα*, as the Word at the beginning of the Gospel was *πρὸς τὸν Θεόν*) and was manifested to us." And to be "in Christ," as here "in Him who is the true," is throughout an insistent phrase (ii. 5, 6, 28; iii. 6, 24, etc.). Here, then, we have again a passage in which Christ is named God without a doubt. "He is the true God."

In 1 John v. 7, 8, occurs the passage, famous in textual dispute: "There are Three who bear witness in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these Three are One; and

* The beginning of the verse is: "We know that the Son of God has come and given us understanding to know Him who is the true (God)." The bringing of God and Christ into juxtaposition has illustration frequently (see pp. 57 and 87), but giving to God and Christ the same appellation—"Him who is the true"—should be noticed, if the meaning is so. "He" of the final clause must refer to "Jesus Christ" immediately preceding. It would be too palpably disingenuous to make the pronoun throw back upon "the true (God)" of the first clause.

there are three who bear witness on earth, the Spirit, the water, and the blood, and these three are to one purport." The first clause is not found in any *uncial* manuscript, and the critics point out that it is a very natural annotation or interpolation for a post-Nicene copyist to make. It would be an anachronism, they contend, to imagine that the doctrine of the Trinity should be formally expressed in a writing of the Apostolic or sub-Apostolic age. Even if there is the belief, there is not yet the dogma.*

But there is something to be said for the retention of the clause. In the first place, grammatically. The masculine gender in the undisputed clause (*οἱ τρεῖς εἰς τὸ ἓν εἰσιν*), referring to the Spirit, the water, and the blood, all of which are neuter in Greek, badly needs explanation. It cannot be due to the inclusion of the Personality of the Spirit, who has a neuter attribution (*τὸ μαρτύρον*) in the previous verse. But if the heavenly Three have already been expressed as *οἱ τρεῖς*, it is not altogether unnatural to retain the same *οἱ τρεῖς* for the earthly. In the second

* Where in Matt. xxviii. 19, Jesus bids His disciples baptize "in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost," there is nothing, it is said, to excite particular attention. Both the Father and the Holy Ghost belong to the discourse of Jesus on frequent occasions. That the Three are One is not declared.

place, contextually. That to which witness is borne is the declaration that Christ is the truth (ὅτι ὁ Χριστός ἐστιν ἡ ἀλήθεια, ver. 6).^{*} To this the Spirit bears witness, and not only so, but “God hath borne witness concerning His Son (ver. 10); he that believeth in the Son hath the witness in Him (ἐν αὐτῷ) and he that believeth not hath made Him a liar.” Not only the witness of the Spirit, the water, and the blood, but “the witness of God which is greater” (ver. 9). The citation of the passage is of no importance with opponents, who are cheered to have objection made in this case so respectable; but it must be acknowledged that, *if* the text be genuine, Christ is certainly said to be God in it.

The doctrine of the Divinity of Christ is not special to St. John, as some persons wish to make out. It is also clearly and uncom-

^{*} Modern editions generally and English versions for the most part read instead, “because the Spirit is truth” (ὅτι τὸ Πνεῦμα ἐστιν ἡ ἀλήθεια). Then the matter of witness will be as declared in what follows, that God has given us eternal life and that this life is in His Son (ver. 11). It may seem strange to explain, but careful perusal of the Epistle should establish it, that either witness comes to the same in St. John’s theology. The Vulgate Latin Version has, “Et Spiritus est qui testificatur quoniam Christus est veritas.” The reading of the Vulgate Version always claims consideration in determining the true Greek text, as it is prior in date to any extant Codex. The Vulgate of course has the seventh verse in its entirety.

promisingly declared outside his writings. In Col. i. 15, fol., Christ is "the Image of the invisible God, the First-begotten of all creation, for in Him were all things created, in heaven or on earth, visible or invisible. All things were created by Him and for Him, and He is before all things and in Him all things subsist." How can the Being so designated be esteemed by a Jew writer to be other than God? The same designation is applied to God in Rom. xi. 36. To St. Paul Christ continually takes the place of Providence. "I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timotheus unto you" (Phil. ii. 19).

St. Paul, in his argument about the divine election of the Jews, among other distinctions of the race, writes that "of them after the flesh is Christ, who is over all, God blessed for ever" (Rom. ix. 5). It might be asked how, in the name of wonder, can it be said that Jesus is nowhere named God in the New Testament, when the page lies open that has that passage? But those who so declare have found a device, however clumsy. The punctuation is altered, a period being placed after "Christ," and the rest being made a fresh sentence: "God, who is over all, (be) blessed for ever." Or, as it were, parenthetically: "Of them, blessed be God, is Christ." Apart from punctuation, the etiology

of the original Greek refuses such rendering. It is an obvious editorial circular argument that reconstructs and construes thus divergently. A circular argument. Places in the Sacred Volume that name Jesus God are in some fashion readjusted by editors so as not to do so. Then, when any *particular one* of such places is adduced, the *general* rule is appealed to as excluding the apparent signification. The rule is formed out of the particular cases, and each particular case is made by the rule ! The same is the *unconscious* obfuscation of ordinary readers who have grown up in the modern unfaith.

Also St. Paul gives (1 Tim. iii. 16) a summary statement of the Christian "mystery": "God was manifested in flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen by angels, preached among the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." This should again be conclusive, beyond the wit of editor to transmute. But a different reading is discovered in some codices: "Who (Ὁς) was manifested," not "God (Θεός) was manifested." And the antecedent of the masculine relative pronoun is found (constructively) in either the "godliness," which is of feminine gender, or in the "mystery," which is of neuter, nothing besides, only "the mystery of godliness" (τὸ τῆς εὐσεβείας μυστήριον), being within reach !

Meanwhile the explanation of the manuscript variant may be that abbreviations are commonly employed, and then in the uncial script ΘΕΟΣ is written ΘΣ, which through inadvertence of the copyist becomes ΟΣ, the bar of the letter Theta being unheeded. In Gal. i. 1, St. Paul writes that he was ordained Apostle, "*not by any man, but by Jesus Christ.*" What could be clearer said ? *

A remarkable and again, it would seem, absolutely conclusive example is found in the address of St. Paul to the assembled presbyters at Miletus (Acts xx. 28), when he admonishes them to "feed the Church of God, which He purchased with His own blood." God has shed His blood for the Church, according to St. Paul, that is to say, Christ is God. The delusion that possesses detached Christians in our time here again is evidenced. Editors of repute (Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles) substitute "the Church of the Lord," and on the occasion of the Revision of the English "Authorised" Version that was issued in 1881, the Revisers, representative Exegetists of England and of the United States of America, allowed this variant to occupy the margin of their page. Probably

* So 1 Thess. iv. 9: "Ye are taught of God (θεοδιδάκτοι) to love one another." The allusion must be to John xiii. 34.

manuscript authority was presented, but the reading formerly accepted is inexpugnable for the intelligent critic. Both the Epistles of St. Paul to the Corinthians are addressed to "the Church of God at Corinth"; and we have "the Church of the living God" in 1 Tim. iii. 15, "the Church of God" in 1 Cor. x. 32 and xv. 9, in Gal. i. 13, in 1 Tim. iii. 5; and in 1 Cor. xi. 16, very strikingly, "the Churches of God"—all, be it observed, examples of St. Paul's manner of speech. "The Church of the Lord" is not an expression that he uses, nor is that combination of words found anywhere in the New Testament.

There are not a few instances of "God" and "Christ" being written indifferently as equivalent and interchangeable names. It is a common practice in speech, and still more in writing, to refer to a particular person by indirect allusion. I might write that we should remember the saying of Solomon, and, a little later, that we should remember the saying of the wisest of men. Or I might write that the brother of our Lord called the tongue "an unruly evil." In the one case there would be no doubt that I meant Solomon to be the wisest of men, nor in the other that I considered St. James to be the brother of our Lord. It is all one as if I had written

“Solomon was the wisest of men” and “St. James was the brother of our Lord.”

Now in Acts xviii. 25, Apollos is said to have been “instructed in the way of the Lord”; evidently the way of Christ, for he taught “the things concerning the Lord,” which would be concerning Jesus. And in the following verse we have it that Aquila and Priscilla expounded to him more particularly “the way of God.” “The way” appears to be a received metonym of Christianity. In Acts ix. 2, Saul goes to Damascus to take prisoners any that he found there “of the way”; in xix. 23, there is “no small disturbance about the way”; in xxiv. 22, Felix is complimented on having more perfect knowledge “of the way”; and in xxii. 4, St. Paul says that he persecuted “this way” to death. Thus the author of the Acts, writing of the way of the Lord, *i.e.* of Christ, and next calling it the way of God, it is all one as if he had called Christ God.

In 1 Cor. ii. 16, it is asked: “Who knew the mind of the Lord?” The context there had argued the inability of the human mind to understand the things of God, which were, however, revealed to “us” by the Holy Spirit. Thus “the mind of the Lord” is the mind of God. We can find the very same phrase—“Who knew

the mind of the Lord ? ”—in Rom. xi. 34, and then the words preceding are : “ O the depth of the wealth and the wisdom and the knowledge of God ! How unsearchable are His judgments, and how untrackable His ways ! ” With the two passages running parallel, it must be the mind of God that is intended. However, the completion of the sentence in 1 Cor. ii. is, “ but we have the mind of Christ.” Similarly, in 1 Cor. ix. 21, we read, “ not outside the law to God but in the law to Christ.” The reservation does not apply, unless being in the law to Christ is the same as being in the law to God, unless “ to Christ ” means the same as “ to God.” Equally in the other reference the mind of Christ must be the same as the mind of God, or else the adversative form of the sentence fails. If Christ is not in either passage named God, if that objection is still urged, Christ is at any rate equivalent to God, it is indifferent whether God or Christ is said. Christ is named God by indirect allusion, as, in the illustration premised, St. James was named the brother of our Lord.

Not only equivalence but absolute identity is expressed in the sentence from Rom. xiv. 10, 11, which has been already adduced in the preceding chapter here (above, p. 71) : “ We shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ ; for

it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bend to Me, and every tongue confess to God." The reference to Isaiah (xlv. 23) can only establish the argument of St. Paul, if his writing Christ was the same as if he had written God. The judgment-seat of Christ (*cf.* 2 Cor. v. 10) is that of God.

This last quotation from St. Paul is not a solitary instance of "God" in the Old Testament being distinguished as "Christ" in the New. St. Peter (1 Peter i. 11) writes of the Hebrew prophets "searching what or what kind of time the Spirit of Christ in them declared." Just so, in 1 Cor. x. 9, St. Paul writes: "Let us not tempt Christ, as some of them (the Israelites in the wilderness) did, and were destroyed by the serpents"—alluding to the occasion of Num. xxi. 4-7. On that recorded sin the eighteenth verse of Ps. lxxvii. [lxxviii.] makes reflection that "they tempted God in their hearts by asking meat for their lust." In Heb. xi. 26, Moses is said to choose "the reproach of Christ." The acts of God recorded in the Old Testament are spoken of as the acts of Christ, the Spirit of God that inspired the prophets as the Spirit of Christ. Could SS. Peter and Paul conceivably so write, if they did not believe Christ to be God; is not their so writing really naming Him God? In

Rom. x. 13, is quoted from Joel (ii. 32), "Who-soever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved," as applying to belief in Christ. But in Joel "the Lord" is Jehovah (see above, p. 52).

No doubt the unreflecting perusal of Holy Scripture is responsible for such allusions being missed. See on p. 84 above. But there is first the preconceived notion that Jesus is not called God, which puts on every text that so calls Him another aspect. When God is named, it does not occur to the reader's mind that Christ can be intended, and even the name of Lord, when divine operations are connected with it, suggests the idea of God our Father in heaven and not at all of Christ. Although "Lord" in the Epistles is continually Christ (above, p. 56) and only occasionally and exceptionally represents God apart from Him. Plain and simple statements are passed over which are perfectly straightforward and which could naturally be read only in one way. It is astonishing, when the meaning is pointed out, to perceive how unmistakeable it really was.

Thus in 2 Peter i. 8, we have "the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ," and, a little lower (ver. 11), with further distinction, "the kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." The first expression appears again in vv. 14, 16; the

second in ii. 20, and in iii. 18 with the continuation, “to Him be glory,” so that “Lord and Saviour,” equally as “Lord” alone, intends only a single person.* But now at the outset of the Epistle (i. 1) we had “the righteousness of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ,” every word of the expression but one the same, and the order of the words the same. Compare the Greek :

τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν καὶ Σωτῆρος Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ—i. 11.

τοῦ Θεοῦ ἡμῶν καὶ Σωτῆρος Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ—i. 1.

How is it possible to make out that Christ is called both Lord and Saviour in the one text and not both God and Saviour in the other? Is it not the plainest perverseness to attempt to do so? “The divine power” of Christ is named in the immediate context (ver. 3).

An exactly parallel expression is that of Titus ii. 13 : “Looking for the blessed hope and appearing in glory † of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ” (ἐπιφανεῖαν τῆς δόξης τοῦ μεγάλου Θεοῦ καὶ Σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ). Unless it is held that we must translate otherwise

* In 2 Peter iii. 2, should not be missed “the commandment of our Lord and Saviour” (τοῦ Κυρίου καὶ Σωτῆρος), without “Jesus Christ” being added.

† τῆς δόξης represents the Hebrew adjectival use. It is “the glorious appearing of the great God,” not “the appearing of the glory of the great God.” This Hebraism is common in the Epistles (1 Tim. i. 11 ; James ii. 1, etc.).

because the position of the pronoun is not as in 2 Peter i. 1! But, in the first place, that objection will establish 2 Peter i. 1, as just translated, if the quotation from the Epistle to Titus is only not allowed to be the same because it is not identically constructed. In the second place, the usage of St. Paul—as also the general language of Holy Scripture—must be considered. The “appearing” (ἐπιφανείαν) is assuredly that of the Second Coming of Christ to judge the world (cf. 1 Tim. vi. 14, 2 Tim. i. 10, iv. 1, etc.). Where in Holy Scripture is Christ recorded to have said that any other than He will appear, and when does any Epistolary writer so instruct us? Christ is to come again from heaven as He was seen to ascend into heaven (Acts i. 11), and in the Ascension there is none other than He beheld. At the first appearing on earth as the Babe of Bethlehem, there was no appearing of God besides, nor will there be, so far as we are instructed, at His second appearing on earth as Judge. If we translate “the appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ,” it would still be meant—could not be meant otherwise—that Christ was the great God. We have τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ Πατρὸς ἡμῶν (1 Thess. iii. 13) = “our God and Father,” and why not then τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ Σωτῆρος ἡμῶν = “our God and Saviour”?

In this Epistle to Titus we have both "God our Saviour" and "Christ our Saviour," sometimes one and sometimes the other. St. Paul writes (i. 3) of "the preaching with which I was charged by the commandment of God our Saviour," and proceeds, "to Titus my own son after the common faith, grace and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour." Is the difference that in the further sentence it is Christ *and not* God as before? Or that, God the Father being named, it must now be "Christ our Saviour" for distinction, not "God our Saviour," *which stood for Him before* (see on p. 122, below)? Certainly St. Paul has received his commission to preach from Christ; the Gospel he preaches was taught him "by the revelation of Jesus Christ" (Gal. i. 1, 11, 12). Then, again (Titus ii. 10), servants are admonished to be well-behaved, "that they may adorn the teaching of God our Saviour in all things." In whatever mode of derivation the teaching may be that of God, it is certainly the teaching of Christ. Compare 1 Tim. vi. 3, in the same connection: "the wholesome words of our Lord Jesus Christ."

It seems to be the same allusion as in the Epistle to Titus—though the significance will be still more persistently refused—which we have

in 1 Tim. vi. 14 : “ I counsel thee that thou keep the commandment, spotless, unrebukeable, till the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, which that blessed and only Potentate shall show, the King of kings and Lord of lords.” In the Apocalypse the title “ King of kings and Lord of lords ” is given to the Lamb (xvii. 14) and to the Word of God (xix. 16). He who shows an appearing should in ordinary speech be he who appears. (In 2 Tim. iv. 1, the “ appearing ” of Christ is again conjoined with His Kingship.) The continuation may, however, then have an unexpected character : “ the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone hath immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light, whom no one of men hath seen or can see.” How can it be said of Christ that no one of men has seen Him ? The theological explanation is, however, ready to hand. In John i. 18, we read, “ None hath ever seen God ” (*cf.* 1 John iv. 12), so that, if Christ be God, the same, as being God, must be said of Him. Christ took human flesh to “ declare ” (ἐξηγήσατο) the unseen God to the world (John i. 18). On His Ascension He returns to the glory He had with the Father before the world was (xvii. 5). He is born a man in order to reveal God to us, and in that sense He tells St. Philip (xiv. 9), “ He that hath seen Me hath

seen the Father.” But otherwise “none knoweth the Son but the Father” (Matt. xi. 27). In a literary and critical aspect of the passage under review, of the First Epistle to Timothy, we should understand that with the fifteenth verse the appearing of Christ is changed into the appearing of the Supreme Being, which is to the writer indifferently equivalent. But that can only be if Christ is the Supreme Being. Then the concluding doxology, “to whom be honour and power everlasting,” may be compared with that of the first chapter (1 Tim. i. 17), “To the King of ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honour and glory for ever and ever.” There, in the first chapter, the context throughout the preceding verses had reference to Christ only. In the Apocalypse, not only is the Word of God styled “King of kings and Lord of lords,” but Jesus says (xxii. 13), “I am Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last,” while at the beginning of the vision (i. 8), we had, “I am Alpha and Omega, saith the Lord God” (Jehovah Elohim). And in the Apocalypse “honour and glory and power” are ascribed to the Lamb (v. 12, 13), and to our Redeemer “glory and dominion for ever and ever” (i. 6).*

* See Excursus II. (p. 142, below) on “The Portraiture of Christ in the Apocalypse.”

In Col. ii. 2, the Vatican Codex (B) has, "In the knowledge of the mystery of God, *even* of Christ," του Θεου Χριστου, and another Uncial (D) has "the mystery of God which is Christ," του Θεου ο εστι Χριστος (*cf.* i. 27), which may be written as equivalent of the other unusual colligation. The sentence as generally found, "of God both the Father and Christ," του Θεου και Πατρος και του Χριστου, would be recollection of that form of expression elsewhere, *e.g.* in Col. i. 2, and, once introduced, would be readily accepted and preferred by copyists with similar recollection, and the other wording being rather *sui generis*. (But "the mystery" in 1 Tim. iii. 16—see above, p. 84—is "God manifested in flesh.") It should be observed that with the commonly received text Christ would still appear to be named God.

There are other passages in the Epistles to which reference might be made as asserting the Divinity of Christ, when once it was fairly accepted that the doctrine might be there. But the idea has been to cite only sentences which were perfectly unambiguous and admitted only of the interpretation given to them. If hesitation is felt, as certainly it will largely be, over the translations proposed, over the analysis of, and reflections upon, the texts adduced, let the

cavillers consider with themselves and conscientiously say whether their hesitation is not due to unbelief that they entertain in the full Deity of Christ, and to their consequent predisposition to find that neither did the writers of the New Testament believe in His Deity in the measure that would appear if He was plainly named God, or if a character was attributed to Him which could not belong to any but the Supreme Being.

The translations are in every instance according to the natural understanding of the sentences in common speech and in everybody's grammar. Let any one read the sentences without religious bias of any kind, without acquaintance with Christian doctrine or with its rejection, the sentences are quite simply expressed, and he could make nothing else of them. But, with the present attitude of the religious mind, at any rate in English-speaking countries, that natural understanding is disallowed, or rather does not occur to consider. It is not any reasoned conviction that opposes, but "my idea and every one's, that nobody ever dreams of questioning or doubting." St. Paul, *e.g.*, would never—so his readers have it firmly rooted in their minds—have written of Christ as "the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords";

accordingly God the Father only can be intended when we meet with such a sentence, and we need not think of anything else. "Son of God" His first disciples are allowed to have confessed Christ to be. But not "God." "That affirmation did not come till later. We might find it in the writing of St. Ignatius or of St. Justin and not doubt the genuineness of the text. But we could not possibly find it in the writing of St. Peter or of St. Paul. In the New Testament, when God is mentioned it must always mean the God of Jew and Christian alike and cannot refer to Christ." So some would have us think.

The natural understanding and translation of the texts adduced in the present chapter, the number of the texts, their confirmation one of another, will come to minds so biassed as something wholly unexpected, as a complete surprise, an utter novelty, and disturbing to any one's ideas, beyond any critical suggestion that seemed possible. They cannot take it into serious consideration immediately. They must leave it for the present. But if they find an opportunity they will see. Like the most excellent governor Felix (Acts xxiii. 26).

CHAPTER VIII

PROPOSED UNITARIAN TEXTS

THOSE who wish to be called Christians while refusing to believe in the Divinity of Christ, who will not be Agnostics or otherwise class themselves apart, pious and estimable persons, have in their minds a conception of Deity, vast, transcendent, pure Spirit, Being beyond fathom, from eternity to eternity, creating the myriad stars—a conception which *a priori* they cannot allow to be identifiable with the appearance of any human being in our natural world, so that it should be possible to say, “He, standing there, is God.” They start with that postulate, which reason cannot but accept, and which is the very kernel, they would say, of an enlightened religious belief.

They regard the Gospels—and so also the remainder of the New Testament—as having a literary character, furnishing us with portraiture of Jesus and with recollected exemplification of His teaching, but not bearing to be heavily leaned upon in historical appreciation, not uniformly convincing in the representation they

supply. The accounts of the miracles of Jesus, of His resurrection, of His promised return to judge the world, may have one or other origin ; they are not accounts of what Jesus was in His life but of what He was in His legend. Meanwhile, within the splendours built about Him, the person of Jesus, simple, guileless, sincere, appears discernible enough, a man beyond the experience of previous historical record, beyond the ideal any mind has ever framed—for our reverent recognition, and not least because He would not let Himself be imagined more than man, our model expressly for this that “ as He is so are we in this world,” that He was “ in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.” When King Agrippa made an oration and the people shouted, “ The voice of God and not of man,” the author of the Acts of the Apostles (xii. 20–24) says that “ an angel of the Lord smote him and he gave up the ghost.” When Jesus spoke, all such profanity was precluded by His mien and the marvel of His speech, “ the gracious words that proceeded out of His mouth ” (Luke iv. 22). To deify Jesus is to do Him wrong.

Such a conception of the Founder of Christianity, it is protested, does not belong to later reflection but is derived from the Gospels themselves when attentively considered ; it is alone

consistent with the language the Gospels employ about Him and with His recorded speech.

The Unity of God was the first article of the Hebraic creed, and was held firm by the first disciples of Jesus, who were of the Jewish race. St. Paul at Athens, when invited to declare his "new doctrine," did little more than condemn the pagan polytheism. Jesus, when questioned by His adversaries, quoted from Deut. vi. 4 : "Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is one Lord." The Unity of God belonged to the teaching of Jesus and belonged to the creed of His disciples—"I believe in God the Father Almighty."

The belief in Jesus, the devotion to Jesus, makes no change. St. Paul writes (1 Cor. viii. 6) : "We have one God, the Father, of whom are all things and we unto Him, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and we through Him." Separate and distinct, though conjoined in the faith and devotion of Christians, God who is our Father and Jesus whom we call our Lord. Similarly (1 Tim. ii. 5) : "There is one God and one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus." Jesus is not only named separately from God, but it is carefully said that He is man.

The distinction, the separate expression, is first and decisively in the teaching of Jesus.

THE UNITY OF GOD

THE UNITY OF GOD

“ This is life eternal, to know Thee the only true God and Jesus Christ whom Thou didst send ” (John xvii. 3). “ How can ye believe, receiving glory from one another, and the glory that comes from the only God ye do not seek ” (v. 44) ? Always it must be distinguished that God is only One. Jesus can do nothing of Himself (viii. 28), He did not come of Himself ; God, the only true God, sent Him (vii. 28). It should be observed that these few last references all belong to the Fourth Gospel, the design of which is stated (xx. 31) to be the promotion of belief in Jesus as the Son of God ; His being so will not conflict with the unshared Deity, with the indissoluble unity, of “ the only true God.”

Jesus acknowledges incidentally on several occasions His being unequal to the transcendence of Deity. He confesses Himself to be less than the Supreme Goodness. “ Why callest thou Me good ? None is good but God ” (Matt. xix. 17). His knowledge is not absolute, as is God’s knowledge. When the Judgment Day will be, is unknown to Him (Mark xiii. 32). His power is limited : “ To sit on My right hand and on My left is not Mine to give, but it shall be given to those for whom it has been prepared by My Father ” (Matt. xx. 23).

If Jesus calls Himself the Son of God, He will

not allow that it gives Him a divine character. According to the understanding of the Jews it would do so, and they charged Jesus with speaking blasphemy. Jesus, however, reminds them that in Scripture men are named sons of God, as in Ps. lxxxi. [lxxxii.] 6 : “ I said, Ye are gods, and all of you sons of the Most High,” and He proceeds, “ If David called those gods to whom the word of God came, say ye, Thou blasphemest, because I said, I am the Son of God ? ” (John x. 35). Clearly we cannot argue—we are forbidden by Jesus to argue—that His being called the Son of God is proof of His Divinity or declares Him at all to be God.

Jesus gives Himself a lower consequence than God has, “ If any one blasphemeth against the Son of Man, he may find forgiveness, but not if he blasphemeth against the Spirit of God ” (Matt. xii. 32, etc.). “ If ye loved Me,” said Jesus (John xiv. 28), “ ye would rejoice that I said, I go to the Father, for the Father is greater than I.” There is a gradation of possession and of power. Thus, St. Paul assures the Corinthians of the divine favour being extended to them. By the link of Christ’s mediating, “ All things are yours, and ye are Christ’s, and Christ is God’s ” (1 Cor. iii. 23). The Corinthians are not God’s possession directly, *vi termini*, by being Christ’s, but

mediately, as Christ belongs to God ; Christ is not Himself God.

The supreme dominion that is declared to be Christ's, as God has put all things under His feet, is of present and temporary tenure ; in the end " the Son shall Himself be subjected to the same who subjected all to Him, that God may be all in all " (1 Cor. xv. 28). The ultimate power is God's ; that of Christ is derived. God is not all in all, but parts with some portion, so long as Christ holds His delegated sovereignty ; Christ being in power makes God so far not in power ; God is supreme not while Christ is supreme, but when Christ ceases to be so ; Christ is not God.

It may be inquired why the texts that have been thus quoted should be given a significance in argument which is withheld from the texts, very much more numerous, which are of opposing purport ; why the detached attitude which is generally displayed towards the record of Holy Scripture, towards the accounts of miracles, towards the belief in the resurrection of Jesus, towards the expression of doctrine in speech and writing by His disciples, should be exchanged for argumentative recognition in the case of these particular texts. The reply would be that the attitude remains ; the texts are not cited for this

doctrinal cogency but for their literary consequence. They are crucial (*instantiæ crucis*) in regard of the belief that His disciples had in Jesus. Writers who held Him to be divine could not possibly have so written ; no inadvertence or lack of perspicuity could explain it ; such notions would not be in their minds, would be absolutely strange and impossible to their imagination—the notions expressed in what we discover them in these texts to have written.

Unitarians are candid and fearless in expressing their view of Christian doctrine. They have no concealment. “ We admit ”—they might say—“ that we had not recognised as being so numerous the passages of the New Testament in which the Divinity of Jesus appears asserted or inevitably implied, the attributes, the nature, the transcendency, of Deity being on the face of the writing expressly imputed to Him. We did not, to tell the truth, take particular note of such passages in our reading ; we rather passed them by. Whether the passages are numerous or scanty, they must admit of being explained. And certainly of some of those adduced the meaning need not be as alleged. Or else the passages must be taken as inexplicable. They cannot be allowed their incongruity. The general tenour of the New Testament writings

is inconsistent with a belief in the Divinity of Jesus.

“ In fifty places God is named, and Jesus also, separately, one after another, without any sort of connection. Jesus is recorded to speak of God, the writers speak of God, without its being necessary to explain that it is the Father who is meant and not the Son. The Divine Being exists for Jesus and for those who hear Him speak, for Evangelists and Apostles and for the converts they have made and whose instruction they have in view. It never occurs to Evangelist or Apostle, nor to Jesus Himself, to distinguish that Jesus is not that Divine Being—no one is likely to suppose it. His disciples assert of Him nothing so incredible. In the ardour of their devotion they make of Him a man beyond other men ; He is Lord of all ; He is to be our Judge ; He is seated on the right hand of God. But not by His own act and essential right. It is God who has exalted Him and given Him a name above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend. He came from God and God sent Him (John viii. 42). He was before Abraham was born—in the eternal counsel and foreknowledge of God. The King of ages, the only God, immortal, invisible (1 Tim. i. 17), is other than He. He is but the image of that invisible God

(Col. i. 15) declaring the unseen God to men (John i. 18).”

So might Unitarians explain. *The explanation has not the precision of reasoned argument.* Put it that God and Jesus are frequently in the New Testament mentioned apart, that the relation of Jesus to His Father is not given the character of an identity of Being, whereas it should have been declared by the writers, and would have been if they had really intended it, that, however it might appear in their imperfect expression, there really and truly was such identity existing. Put it that the insuperable argument lies there. But if the general objection so runs, and if, meeting that objection, evidence is offered of the identity being in fact declared, surely the number of occasions on which it is declared must have a bearing on the argument. If it was only half a dozen times, then indeed the exceptional utterance might be ignored or explained away, as Unitarians make it their endeavour to do.

But what would any one have? The sacred writers, it is said, do not exclude, carefully and expressly, the Unitarian Christology. But they do. They exclude it in the very numerous instances which have been exhibited on preceding pages here. What Unitarians would have to be

the evident and unmistakeable belief of the writers, is qualified in every one of the component portions of the Sacred Volume, from "God-with-us" of the first chapter of St. Matthew to "the true God and eternal life" of 1 John v. 20, to "the Alpha and Omega" of the ending of the Apocalypse.

To take another point. The contradiction existing between a true idea of God and the incarnation of Deity, the repugnance felt towards a theophany by the higher religious consciousness, as in the Unitarian conception, may be admitted to have the support of reason and natural religion. And thence came the benediction bestowed upon St. Peter when he declared Jesus to be "the Son of the living God" in the proper sense of sonship, as explained above (p. 34); thence came the sentence of Jesus that God had revealed it to St. Peter, and only so could he have spoken. The Trinity, the Incarnation, are mysteries of faith, and the ground of our belief in them is the evidence of their having been divinely revealed and nothing else whatever. Unitarians insist that not only *the fact* of revelation should be demonstrated, but that *the truth of the matter* of the revelation should be. This is an attitude which renders impossible the grace of becoming a Christian. Argumentatively, the demand fails to

catch the consequence of the orthodox proposition. For, if the fact is demonstrated, the fact that God has spoken, and if that is admitted, it must be not only profane but idle to dispute further. The Gospel is declared to be a divine revelation from the first. When St. Paul came to Corinth he writes (1 Cor. ii. 1) that he came "declaring to you the testimony of God." What he preaches is (Gal. i. 12) "by the revelation of Jesus Christ." "Faith"—nothing else—"is the substance of our hope, the evidence of things unseen" (Heb. xi. 1). "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy" (Apoc. xix. 10). If the foregoing chapters here have been adequately considered, readers should be fully satisfied, not of the fact of revelation in itself, but incontrovertibly of that belief belonging to the writers of the New Testament and to the earliest Christian community.

So much being premised, we may proceed to consider the several texts that have been set out as declaring the Unitarian doctrine. Theologically, the attendant argument has an uninstructed nature; what the Church holds is not anywhere consciously present to the mind of the Unitarian expositor. In the Catholic creed Jesus is every whit as really and truly man as ever Unitarians would have Him to be. When He

willed to become the Child of Mary, He condescended to human limitations. In His childhood He "advanced in wisdom," and in mature age He still accommodated His omniscience to the conditions of His life and of the work He was born to do. At the end of His life He tells His Father, "I have finished the work that Thou gavest Me to do" (John xvii. 4). The Word of God submitted, while a man among men, to display no acquaintance with geology, though He laid the foundations of the earth, nor with astronomy, though the heavens are the work of His hands. Such accommodation may explain His declaration of ignorance about the date of the Day of Judgment. He does not know. He is devoid of knowledge to instruct men in things which do not belong to their condition upon the earth as God has appointed it for them. He is thus devoid according to His own will and purpose in His incarnation. Certainly it would not be for our good that the date of the Day of Judgment should be known. We are to watch and pray because we know not when the time is (Mark xiii. 33). It is not to be with us as in the days of Noah and as in the days of Lot. We are to keep our lamps trimmed. It is good for us that we should have that reason. Jesus, we may suppose, could not, in such sense of "could not,"

tell His disciples when the world was created, nor could He tell them when the world should end.

Meanwhile the impartial expositor remains doubtful about what precisely Jesus did say, because there are two different accounts. The sentence in St. Mark's Gospel (xiii. 32) is : " But of that day and hour knoweth none, no, not the angels in heaven, nor yet the Son, but the Father only." In St. Matthew's version the clause, " nor yet the Son," is omitted.* So that there is some uncertainty, and the foregoing apologetic may not in reality be needed.

The theology of the apologetic was nevertheless perfectly orthodox, if there is occasion for its production. Jesus, however marvellous in Himself, however transcending the human scope (Luke v. 22, vii. 39, 40), may deign to have His divine *knowledge* in such respect laid aside. The limitation of the *power* of Jesus in Unitarian exegesis exists only in the English Version, where the particular text occurs (Matt. xx. 23 ; Mark x. 40). What Jesus said was, " To sit on My right hand and My left is not Mine to give, but is for those for whom it has been prepared." The

* Some suggest that the clause was added in St. Mark by an Arian copyist ; others that it was omitted in St. Matthew by an orthodox for fear of Arian misinterpretation.

appointment is already made, and is not any longer to be given. Said a Greek poet—

μόνου γὰρ αὐτοῦ καὶ θεὸς στερίσκεται,
ἀγένητα ποιεῖν ἄσος' ἂν ἦ πεπραγμένα.*

St. Matthew has “prepared *by My Father*.” But it is equally, then, by Jesus also—“I and My Father are one”; “What the Father doeth, that the Son also doeth” (John v. 19). For Catholic theology the power of Jesus in the example given is no more and no less limited than is the power of God. “By My Father” is absent in St. Mark’s account. The power of God is limited only by His own act and will.

When Unitarians lay stress upon the Hebraic dogma of the Unity of God, which is affirmed by Jesus and by His disciples after Him, as though that dogma were opposed to the idea of Jesus being God; what the Unitarians really mean is that there is only one Person who is God, and that Jesus cannot be God as He is another Person. The argument reveals some species of ignorance, whether of elementary Catholic theology, or, before that, the miscomprehension of the ordinary uneducated mind. Or else it is purely *ad captandum*. No orthodox Christian

* “That one thing is denied even to God,
To make the thing done not to have been.”

ever believed there to be two *Gods* ; but within Deity, there are two *Persons*, of the Father and of the Son, who, with the addition of the Holy Ghost, make the Trinity in Unity of the Catholic creed. The conception of more than one Person and but one Substance is no doubt beyond human intelligence ; it is a mystery of faith, as already distinguished (above, p. 109). The doctrine of the Trinity of Persons is rejected by Unitarians, who have their name accordingly. But it will not serve them controversially to ascribe to Catholic confession a condemned heresy of the first age !

In the passage quoted from the First Epistle to the Corinthians, “ We have one God the Father and one Lord Jesus Christ,” it is, first of all, gratuitous to suppose a difference of degree between the name of God and that of Lord, as though it was always and necessarily present, and could be assumed to belong to the sentence brought forward.* Further, the sentence itself gives like attribution to either denomination. So that it is in reality a text not for but against the Unitarian contention. All things are “ of ” or “ through ” the Father and Jesus, and we

* See the argument regarding (1) the employment of Lord (Κύριος) to translate the Hebrew Jehovah, which is (2) discovered also in the Epistolary writings (above, pp. 52 and 56).

human creatures or Christians are “unto” (εἰς) the one, and “through” (διὰ) the other. Nor is any distinguishing difference to be discovered in the variation between “unto” and “through.” For elsewhere (Rom. xi. 36) all things are said to be of and through (διὰ) and unto (εἰς) God. And again (Col. i. 16) all things have been created through (διὰ) and unto (εἰς) Christ, and (Heb. ii. 10) “for Him and through Him,” δι’ ὁν and δι’ οὗ.

Unitarians find another reference (1 Tim. ii. 5) which is supposed to make the meaning clearer still in their sense. God and Jesus are similarly named in conjunction, and Jesus is specially distinguished as being man—“the man Christ Jesus.” “There is one God, one Mediator also between God and man, the man Christ Jesus.” But it is prodigiously *ex parte* to find in this discovery a denial of the Divinity of Christ, to make of the text anything “crucial,” as Unitarians would have their selected texts to be, to represent the sentence as being what a believer in the Divinity could not possibly have penned. That Jesus is our Mediator by virtue of His being man, need have no other bearing than that He became man to redeem us. If He mediates by having made atonement, and if He has made atonement by His passion and death,

then certainly the Mediator is "the man Christ Jesus." How, in any case, does it touch the orthodox doctrine that Christ is *both* Man and God ? Why not even, "The man Christ Jesus, the one God, and also the one Mediator between God and men" ?

What is to be said of the occasion when Jesus would not have Himself called good ? (Matt. xix. 17). In the first place we should observe that there is a various reading in St. Matthew's text. His questioner had asked of Jesus, "Good Master (or *v.l.*, 'Master'), what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life ?" Jesus replies, "Why callest thou Me good ? None is good but one, that is God." Or else (*v.l.*) He replies, "Why questionest thou Me about what is good ? One is the good, even God." This other reading is accepted by the Vulgate, the "Douay" Version, and the Protestant "Revised Version." Mark and Luke have "Why callest thou Me good ?" but they have "good Master," so as to make their context, and omit "good thing" (having simply "What shall I do ?") which Matthew needed. The variations in Matthew may be due to harmonization, conscious or unconscious, with the other Synoptics that the copyist introduces.

And further ; accepting the Unitarian reading

of St. Matthew's text, it is still by no means the only interpretation that Jesus should mean that He was not to be called good. It is begging the question to argue that Jesus excludes Himself. The meaning might equally be, "Dost thou by calling Me good intend Me to be God? if not, why so call Me?" The objection taken by Jesus would then be His constantly recurring objection to the unthinking speech of those about Him. As when He said that if God in the language of succeeding Jewish generations was called the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, then the three patriarchs must be held to be still living (Matt. xxii. 32, etc.). Or when Jesus reproves the corrupt tradition of Jewish observance of the law, as regards ceremonial washing (Mark vii. 8), or the plea of Corban (ver. 11), or the distinction of obligation between swearing by the altar and swearing by the offering that lies upon the altar (Matt. xxiii. 18), or as regards the keeping of the Sabbath, in more than one application (Luke vi. 1-10, etc.).

Meanwhile, it is true that Jesus refuses the praise of men, that He avoids celebrity, popular acclaim—"I receive not testimony from man" (John v. 34).* He fled from the multitude that

* Aristotle (*Eth. Nic.*, I. xii. 5) takes it as a self-evident axiom that God, being absolute, may not be accorded praise.

would make Him king (vi. 15). He charged those whom He healed not to make Him known (Mark iii. 12, etc.), His raising of Jairus' daughter must not be told of (v. 43) — not altogether because of hindrance to His ministry that might ensue. Similar to the occasion under review, if Jesus would not be called good, was when He eluded the speech of a woman who cried out, "Blessed is the womb that bore Thee and the breasts that Thou didst suck" (Luke xi. 27, 28). It was not untrue that the womb was blessed (*cf.* i. 42), nor was it untrue that Jesus was supreme goodness.*

Jesus does not make Himself less than God by distinguishing that blasphemy against Him may be forgiven, as blasphemy against the Spirit of God cannot be. The explanation is ordinary and familiar. What was the occasion of the saying? That the Pharisees charged Jesus with casting out devils by Beelzebub the prince of the devils (Matt. xii. 24). Was that an example of the sin against the Son of Man that might be

* The completed passage of St. Luke is erroneously made by some folk into disparagement of the Virgin-Mother. As if it was the same as the occasion of viii. 21, though neither on that occasion is there disparagement for the fair-minded reader. But when the woman so cried out, the Mother of Jesus is not directly in question. It is Jesus and not His Mother whom the woman intends to extol.

forgiven? Surely not; the mention of the sin against the Holy Ghost is induced by that speech of the Pharisees. Jesus had appeared to the people as Messiah: "Is not this," they said, "the Son of David?" (ver. 23). To speak, then, against His being the Messiah, "against the Son of Man," is pardonable, being due to ignorance and prejudice. But not if it is charging the Son of Man with being leagued with Satan, which would show moral perversion of the speaker's conscience. The blasphemy against the Holy Ghost is thus blasphemy spoken against Jesus. The distinction is not between blaspheming Jesus and blaspheming God, but between one sort of speaking against Jesus which is pardonable, and another sort which is not. The latter sort is blaspheming against the Holy Ghost, not as being other than against Jesus but as being against Him. Blaspheming against Jesus is in such case blaspheming against the Holy Ghost—Jesus is not less than, but on equality with, God.

On preceding pages many instances have been adduced of Jesus being named the Son of God by the writers of the New Testament and of His being recorded by them to have so named Himself, with no merely titular application of the name, but in the sense of a proper Sonship and

participation in the Divine nature. It is pitiful to bring forward as complete contradiction a single recorded occasion on which He eluded objection that was brought against Him for giving Himself the name. The reference to the Psalm that called those gods to whom the Word of God came, is of similar character with the reference (Matt. xxii. 43, 44, etc.) to another Psalm in which David calls the Son of David his Lord. Those were sons of God in the old time to whom the Word of God came, came in the sense of the Word being spoken to them. May not the Word of God who comes to their descendants in His proper Person, may He not call Himself therewith the Son of God? The Evangelist cannot intend Jesus to disclaim His being God, when the occasion of the Jews' disputing was that Jesus had said, “I and My Father are one”! Those *were called* gods to whom the Word of God came. And the Word of God *is* God.*

The objection taken by Unitarians against the sacred writers having in their minds or

* Something is missed not infrequently in the Gospel by failure to recognise that Jesus uses *irony*, which is to the student of style very evidently present in the speech of Jesus on the occasion under review, as also, *e.g.*, in the reference on p. 115, and Matt. ~~x~~x. 1-15, may be noticed.

intending to express the Divinity of Jesus, because Jesus is generally represented by them as being subordinate in power and dignity, as being sent by God and acting wholly under His direction ("the Son can do nothing of Himself, only what He seeth the Father doing" John v. 19)—that objection, if it proposes to find a contrast between Scriptural language and the Catholic doctrine, displays again theological ignorance, that is to say, ignorance of orthodox Christian theology—or rather, perhaps, the cavillator wittingly turns his head aside. He who "thought it no spoliation that He should be equal to God" (Phil. ii. 6), yet took upon Him the form of a servant, and, though being the Son, "learned obedience" (Heb. v. 8). As the Word of God became Man, so the sacred writers find frequent occasion to speak of Jesus with regard to His human nature, which is certainly inferior to the divine—"My Father is greater than I" (John xiv. 28).

The sovereignty of Christ has its appointed end, when He will deliver up the kingdom to God the Father, that God may be all in all (1 Cor. xv. 24-28). The office of Christ, however, is referred to, as He is the Head of the Church militant, as He is Mediator between God and man, as He "ever liveth to make intercession for

the people of God " (Heb. vii. 25). The end is when the visible creation is destroyed and the generations of mankind have ceased, and there are none further to be redeemed. Christ the Redeemer is no more in act, though still in title ("He who bought us," Apoc. v. 9), but Christ the Alpha and Omega, Christ the offspring of David, the bright and morning star, still abides. When God is all in all, Christ is the same, if He is God; His changeless Deity remains. God is not all in all, as Christ has delivered up His sovereignty, but as "there is neither mourning nor cry nor toil any more, but the former things have passed away" (Apoc. xxi. 4). So that to make the text of 1 Cor. xv. oppose the Divinity of Christ, it must first be assumed that Christ is not God, which was the thing to be proved—*petitio principii*.

It is careless or malicious to represent that Jesus appears in the Gospel in such guise that it is never possible to imagine Him to be God—to represent that God is continually named without need of distinguishing that Jesus is not meant. It is untrue. As evidenced by a plethora of references to the contrary that have been exhibited on preceding pages. When Jesus stilled the storm, His disciples asked each other in awe, "Who then is this?" (Mark iv. 41).

Jesus is worshipped and persons kneel to Him. He is recorded to speak of Himself in such terms as in the understanding of His hearers to make Himself God (John v. 18, x. 33). The "atmosphere" of the Gospel narrative is one of multitudes and of individuals approaching Jesus as more than man and of Jesus being reviled time after time as claiming for Himself a divine Personality. How is it possible to miss that atmosphere, to assert a contrary description to belong to the Evangelical narrating?

In the Epistles it is true that God and Jesus are written of contiguously as being evidently distinct, but it is also true that no less frequently "God the Father" is written, as if the distinction would not be apparent otherwise. Thus commonly in greetings: "Grace be to you and peace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ" (ἀπὸ Θεοῦ Πατρὸς καὶ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, Gal. i. 3), when, if "the Father" were not added, it might be as in Titus ii. 13 (above, p. 79), which tells of "our God and Saviour Jesus Christ" (Θεοῦ καὶ Σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ).^{*} More distinctly yet (1 Thess. iii. 11), "God Himself our Father and Jesus Christ our

^{*} Compare the exegesis of p. 93 above, on the wording of Titus i. 3, 4.

Lord," and (2 Thess. ii. 16), "our Lord Jesus Christ Himself and God our Father." Without such distinction expressed, "God" may be determined by the context to mean Christ. As where (Rom. xiv. 10, 11) one sentence is that "we shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ," and the next that "every tongue shall confess to God." Or, without the need of context, by the sentence itself: "The Church of God which He purchased with His own blood" (Acts xx. 28). So much as regards Apostolic writers not finding it necessary when God is mentioned to distinguish that the Father is intended and not the Son. It is mere assertion, and assertion that is not true.

When God descended upon our globe, He appeared, in His mercy and wisdom,* in the form of man, for human cognizance and association, seeming outwardly but little different from others. The incredibility proposed by Unitarians that any one should be able to say, "He there, standing on the left, is God," miscomprehends the position. Those who are astounded by the wisdom or by the supernatural power of Jesus, declare Him to be divine and not human, "the

* "And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look upon God" (Exod. iii. 6).

Son of God.”* They do not go beyond, to name Him the Lord God, to worship Him as the High Priest yearly worshipped in the Most Holy shrine. But they did worship Him (above, p. 17). Jesus “manifested forth His glory, and *His disciples* believed in Him” (John ii. 11). But He remains to their sensible apprehension a man. He is God, but not so as to be called God without explanatory addition—God who appears as man (Phil. ii. 7).

Jesus said indeed (John xiv. 9), “He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father.” But virtually and in effect, not actually, is meant. What St. Philip had asked was that Jesus should show the Father to the disciples, so that the hazard of faith might be changed into the certainty of knowledge. He who sees Jesus, sees the Father. First, in respect of identity of being and character. Between human beings there is sometimes a close resemblance, of feature, of manner, of action, so that to know a man it suffices to be acquainted with his son. The resemblance between Jesus and His Father is an absolute resemblance. Secondly, the divine mind, the divine power, the divine justice

* Which was the identical expression of King Nebuchadnezzar, when he beheld the appearance of a divine deliverer (above, p. 31).

(" Which of you convicteth Me of sin ? " viii. 46), are exhibited in outward expression in Jesus. So that if the Father were beheld, it would be nothing different and nothing more. Thirdly, the petition made by St. Philip is idle in its design—" Show us the Father, *and it sufficeth us.*" Because faith is already moral certainty. " I *know* Him," writes St. Paul (2 Tim. i. 12), " in whom I have believed, and *am assured* that He is able to keep safe my deposit until the day."

The orthodox doctrine, when understood, should satisfy Unitarians against the monstrosity they had imagined, if " the carpenter, whose father and mother we know," is to have come down from heaven (Mark vi. 3 ; John vi. 42). Divinity belongs to Jesus, to His words and acts, to Himself, but it is not a sensible appearance for popular apprehension ; it is the revelation of God to faith. Something of the substance of the Unitarian objection should be found to have disappeared.

The belief of His disciples in the Divinity of Jesus leads on to the doctrine of the Blessed Trinity and shapes it formally in theological idea.* The Church absolves and blesses " in

* The doctrine, however, is not created by deduction and inference, but may be assigned to the teaching of the post-Resurrection Forty Days, the time when Jesus promised : " I will show you plainly of the Father " (John xvi. 25).

the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." The blessing of St. Paul's Epistles is similarly triform : " The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you " (2 Cor. xiii. 14, etc.). So does the name of the Son appear conjointly with those of the Father and of the Holy Ghost in the words of administration of Christian Baptism (as directed by Jesus, Matt. xxviii. 20). Without disparity of dignity or degree. And without detriment to the Unity of the Godhead. The Son is the image of the Father, one and the same Divinity reflecting in the Father and reflected in the Son (Heb. i. 3) : " There is none other God but one " (1 Cor. viii. 4). The Trinity in Unity is discovered in verbally complete expression, in the portrayal of Evangelists and in the teaching of Apostles. It is integral with the ascription of Divinity to the Incarnate Word.

When the Catholic creed is thus stated and possibly cleared of misapprehension, it should be remembered that nothing is said about the truth or falsehood of one or other doctrine. The argument does not go beyond the expression of doctrine in the language of the New Testament, what the Apostles of Christ actually taught and what their converts consequently confessed, for

their converts were “steadfastly abiding in the doctrine of the Apostles” (Acts ii. 42). Passages of Holy Scripture have been brought together in large numbers expressing the Divinity of Jesus; and some few of apparently adverse significance, texts that Unitarians would have to be “crucial,” were found under examination to be no different in fact, but to confirm the doctrine of the others. The Unitarian confession may be alone consistent—it is not disputed—with a true and adequate idea of Deity, such as accords with reason and the maturity of mental growth.

But it is disputed that the Unitarian confession can claim in any sense or semblance to represent a purification of Christian belief from the conceptions of later theology and a return to an imagined simplicity and spirituality of the creed of the first Christian age, of the original version of the teaching of Jesus. Unitarians need not only to discriminate, to make selection, to introduce accommodation, in their acceptance of the record and of the doctrine as found in the New Testament writings; they must abandon the New Testament writings altogether as evidence; their Unitarian creed is the creed of reason, not the creed of revelation, not the creed of Christianity.

Or no. From the Gospels, they say, as

literary and historical records, is disentangled the truth of the personality of Jesus which the Gospels contain. Just as, for example, from the early legends of Roman history may be constructed another version of the origin and constitution of the City; or as from the pages of Thucydides may be obtained a Pericles of another statesmanship than the historian would present. The Christ of Unitarian devotion is the true Christ of the Gospels. Enough; let it be allowed. But still not the Christ of the Gospel writers. Their testimony is refused, their authority is superseded. The Unitarian Christology belongs neither to Evangelists nor to Apostles, nor to the creed that converted the world. All that authority must cease to be, if God was not manifested in human flesh when Christ was born.

EXCURSUS I

OF THE EVIDENTIAL SUPERIORITY OF THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST IN ITS OCCURRENCE AND IN ITS PREACHING

THE belief that His Apostles held in the Divinity of Christ was assured by His resurrection, and even, we might think, existed only in a flickering and uncertain manner before (above, pp. 13, 14). In the Gospel narratives the faith of the disciples, as well as of the outside multitude, is depicted as imperfect. "If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed." "How is it that ye have not faith?" Thus, when Jesus foretold that He should be crucified and should rise again the third day, the Twelve did not take it in (Luke xviii. 34); they "questioned among themselves what the rising from the dead should mean" (Mark ix. 10). It should not surprise us if their faith was unequal to understanding so tremendous a miracle.

Rising from the dead is a different thing from raising another dead person to life, and

displays a more extraordinary exercise of power. St. Peter is recorded (Acts ix. 40) to have been able to raise the dead, or—to speak more accurately—to have been able to invoke the power of God to do it, as also St. Paul (xx. 8–10), and in pre-Christian times Elijah (3 [1] Kings xvii. 22) and Elisha (4 [2] Kings iv. 34, 35). In such manifestations there is a living and conscious will to effect the miracle by the favour of God. But in the case of a dead man rising again of himself, without any word or prayer spoken upon him, it is a hundredfold more astonishing. The dead man must still in death have consciousness, will, power to act, or at least what may be called a subconsciousness; as in sleep, with immediate horror of some kind impending on the dreamer, who with a strong effort wakes himself. Or the dead body has still life in itself potentially and comes back to actual life after a determined time has elapsed; as it is possible to fix in the mind before falling asleep an hour at which to wake, and the sleeper wakes accordingly. So, at least, it would appear to human imagination, if a man were really dead and had been buried, and should come out of his grave alive after a set time.

It may be objected that, as declared in Holy Scripture, the resurrection of Christ is not as the

argument suggests. God is said to have raised Jesus from the tomb (Acts ii. 24 ; xxvi. 8, etc.), not that He rose of Himself. But the event has also given it another aspect. Jesus said of His human life, " I have power to lay it down, *and I have power to take it again* " (John x. 18). He rose " because it was not possible that He should be held by death " (Acts ii. 24). Certainly God " raised up His Son Jesus " (iii. 26). But the operation of God in such connection cannot be dissociated from the Personality of Jesus. " As the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given also to the Son to have life in Himself " (John v. 26).

When St. John writes of himself (xx. 8) that on Easter morning he " saw and believed," it was not merely that he believed in Jesus having risen, but that he believed Him in truth and reality to be the Son of God. Otherwise, with the crucifixion of Jesus, His disciples had lost faith in Him as the promised Messiah. The two on the road to Emmaus say, " We trusted that it had been He who should have redeemed Israel " (Luke xxiv. 21), implying that they had been compelled to abandon that idea about the Prophet of Nazareth. The prospect of the resurrection of Jesus was not entertained. St. Mary Magdalen's sole conclusion, when she

found the Sepulchre empty, was that some one had taken the Body away, even though there were to be seen angels attending (John xx. 13, 15). The disciples of Jesus, "as yet knew not the Scriptures, that He must rise from the dead" (ver. 9). They did not believe the account of St. Mary Magdalen and her companions, "some women" (Luke xxiv. 22), on their return; although Jesus, before He suffered, had on several occasions described the events beforehand in their order: the crucifixion, the burial, the resurrection. If they had believed constantly in the Divinity of Jesus, it seems impossible that they should not have recalled what He had said, that it should not have caused them still to hope. But no; the crucifixion had been, the trial, the condemnation, the sentence of death; Jesus was laid in the tomb like any other dead, with devotion and reverence indeed, but it was the end. As it was written in the Psalm (lxx. [lxxi.]), "God hath forsaken him; persecute him and take him, for there is none to deliver him"; there had been none.

Nevertheless, in one who had assisted at the burial the former faith lived on. We have nothing recorded of the mind of the Virgin-Mother. Of her there was nothing told in the long narrative of the Passion until St. John in

his later Gospel named her (xix. 25) at the foot of the Cross.* But it may be confidently inferred that there was not any such breakdown of faith in her case as appeared in others. Else it is unaccountable that she should not have been among the women who visited the Sepulchre on Easter morning. She was no doubt overwhelmed with grief when St. John took her to his lodging (John xix. 27). But the rest of the Sabbath had intervened, and if she had been at all able, she must have gone. We may notice that a special character attached to her. She was the last surviving witness of the Incarnation.

It is pretty certain that the disciples of Jesus during His earthly lifetime knew nothing of the events of His birth and infancy. The particulars St. Luke furnishes might in some part be told to him by the Virgin-Mother before he wrote, and might be fully revealed to him in his writing, but that would on either supposition be later. Similarly as regards the particulars belonging to St. Matthew's account. About the Annunciation, the Visitation, the story of the Shepherds on Christmas morning, the adoration of the

* Regarding this silence see the observations ventured in *The Mother of Jesus in the First Age and After* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner, & Co.).

Magi at Epiphany, about all the early attestation, the disciples of Jesus, when they became His disciples, were ignorant. They would not else have been so unprepared to hear that Jesus was the Messiah (John i. 41), nor would Nathaniel have raised objection (ver. 46). There was no knowledge abroad of "the Son of Joseph" being one who should be observed when He came to man's estate; the eyes of none turned to "the Son of Joseph" till He began to teach and to work miracles (Mark vi. 2, 3); when His forerunner the Baptist appeared, people wondered instead whether he was the Messiah (Luke iii. 15). It is true that St. John the Baptist attested the Divinity of Jesus. But John was son of Elizabeth (of the Visitation) and cousin of Jesus, and would know something of the tradition of his own family at least; besides, the Divinity of Jesus may be said to have been revealed to him both at the Baptism of Jesus and before (John i. 32-34). The testimony of John apparently went unheeded except by St. Andrew and "the other disciple" who "followed Jesus" (ver. 37).

But the Virgin-Mother had from the first beginning laid up in her heart what Jesus said (Luke ii. 51); doubtless also all that was said about Him and all that occurred regarding Him.

The events of her Annunciation and of the birth and infancy of Jesus were indelible in her recollection, and maintained inviolate for her the certainty of His Divinity. For her the crucifixion and death, despite that her mother's heart was pierced, could not be the end. She did not visit the Sepulchre; her speech, if she had spoken, would be that of the angels to the woman, "Why seek ye the living among the dead?" (Luke xxiv. 5). She knew that "He is not there; He is risen, *as He said*" (Matt. xxviii. 6). The resurrection of Jesus did not create or confirm His Mother's faith in His Divinity; but her faith in His Divinity, in "the Sanctity" that she bore, assured her, left no doubt in her, that *Dux vitæ mortuus regnat vivus*—"the Lord of life, though dead, still reigns and lives."

The Resurrection of Jesus was established by His appearance in bodily substance. The Eleven returned to the faith they had in Him before He suffered; St. Thomas exclaimed: "My Lord and my God." The resultant disposition should be truthfully imaged as motivating the action that would ensue. The Resurrection might indeed be made the ground of Christian assurance of the existence of a life after death (1 Thess. iv. 14, etc.), and some have imagined the triumph of Christianity to have mainly been achieved

through its promise of immortality. But the Resurrection was preached not in reference to the Christian but in reference to Christ. The office of the Twelve was to be witnesses to the Resurrection. Thus, after the Apostolic College had become short of its number through the exclusion and death of the traitor, the election of St. Matthias was that he might be "a witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus along with us" (Acts i. 22). The Resurrection was the text of the speech of Apostles. Conjoined with the Ascension—a no less stupendous and awe-inspiring marvel. "Jesus is raised from the dead; He is ascended to sit on the right hand of God; thus He is Lord and Christ; we are the witnesses." So spoke St. Peter on the day of Pentecost. Similarly, St. Paul at Antioch in Pisidia, his first recorded speech: "God has raised Jesus from the dead, and those who saw Him many days alive are His witnesses; God has thereby declared Jesus to be His Son." The subsequent creed of Christendom is: "The third day He rose again from the dead, and ascended into heaven."

The inevitable effect on the minds of the Twelve of the experiences through which they had passed, should be comprehended. They had seen Jesus alive, conversed with Him, eaten

with Him, repeatedly during forty days. None of His manifestations of divine power during His ministry—which still compelled their confession of Him—were equal to this. Those were His acts; this was Himself. His acts before were divine; now He was God. “We cannot but speak,” said Peter and John before the Sanhedrim (Acts iv. 20), “the things which we have seen and heard.”

But Unitarians, and others who do not include themselves in the Unitarian confession, would have both Resurrection and Ascension to be later additions, to be hallucinations, to be unconscious embellishments, what was devotional ascription and suggestion becoming converted, as time went on, into historical and established occurrence. The reference still holds good for the argument of preceding exposition, though that were so. The concern is what Evangelists narrated, what Apostles said and put in writing. The *record* is the thing, and the record is of Jesus being seen alive after He was dead and buried, of His being beheld to ascend. Did the Evangelist and the writer of the Acts of the Apostles, when he so recorded, conceive of the witnesses of those manifestations believing Jesus to be no more than man, or even believing Him to be merely of higher nature, equal to the angelic or

transcending it, His proper nature beyond human comprehension ? The Evangelists in the course of their narratives name Him divine, tell of Him as so naming Himself. Did they not mean it to be understood that those who saw Him risen from the grave, who saw Him ascend into the sky, would conclude that it was indeed God with whom they had lived,* coming in and going out with Him, and who had taught them and made them the depositaries of His doctrine ? From Bethany, after Jesus had ascended, they “ returned to Jerusalem with great joy.” But first “ they worshipped Him ” (*προσκυνήσαντες αὐτόν*, Luke xxiv. 52). There is really no discussion possible.

The final and unwavering confession of the Divinity of Jesus by His Apostles was consequent upon the Resurrection. The difference of before and after plainly appears. Faith and understanding had been uncertain and the chosen Twelve were fully unconscious that in “ the hour of darkness ” they had been found wanting ; they were charged to “ watch and pray,” and “ the flesh was weak ” and they had failed. But when Jesus, after He was risen, appeared on the

* The creed of St. Athanasius declares : “ The Father is God and the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God.” The “ Person ” is the Son, but a Divine Person.

shore of the Lake of Galilee, St. John said, "It is the Lord"; there was no doubt or question then.

Accordingly, the witness of His preachers to the Divinity of Jesus took the form of their testifying that He had risen from death and that they had themselves seen Him alive again. "Blessed are they" said Jesus, "who have not seen and who have believed." By the context it might be believing Jesus to be "Lord and God" or believing Him to be alive from the dead; but the one is integral with the other. Belief in the Resurrection was a first article of Christian confession: "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus and shalt believe in thy heart that God raised Him from the dead." St. Paul names himself Apostle "by Jesus Christ and God who raised Him from the dead" (Gal. i. 1). St. Paul's doctrine is clearly defined. "We were reconciled to God by the death of His Son; much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life," *i.e.* by His resurrection from death (Rom. v. 10). "Who is there to condemn us? It is Christ who died, rather, who is risen, who sits at the right hand of God, who makes intercession for us" (viii. 34).

It follows, by unimpeachable consequence,

that those in our time who do not fully believe in the Divinity of Christ, do not fully believe either in His resurrection, the former being emptied of reality and the latter being disallowed its witness. The Mother of God, as has been shown, could not doubt the Divinity of her Son, and she had faith in His resurrection. Those who dispute her title are the same who will not have Christ to rise again. The confession is triply guarded. Believe that Mary conceived by the Holy Ghost, then it is agreeable to reason that her Child should be called Emmanuel, God-with-us, and that also being believed, the incredible thing becomes not that Jesus should rise again, but if He had been recorded to have died and death to have been His end. The Christian Revelation is an articulated and indissoluble whole, and the history of every heresy is of a little refusal growing into more, of a first rift widening into full and complete separation. Christians may take to themselves the charge given to St. Timothy: "Guard the deposit" (1 Tim. vi. 20), "hold fast the pattern of sound words" (2, i. 13), the pattern which St. Paul had bequeathed. The pattern-Gospel of St. Paul was, "God blessed for ever," and "God manifested in human flesh, raised up into glory." The Catholic offers devotion to Mother and

Child, to the image of Mary with the infant Jesus in her arms ; the Catholic therefore and there-with proclaims to the infidel and pagan world the Gospel of the Divinity of Christ.

EXCURSUS II

OF THE PORTRAITURE OF CHRIST IN THE APOCALYPSE

IF the business in hand were to establish the truth of the doctrine of the Divinity of Christ, it is possible that very little use could be made of the Apocalypse. The book, it is objected, is no account of Jesus as He lived nor does it (except chaps. ii. and iii.) represent doctrinal exposition or disciplinary instruction such as belong to Epistles. Its authorship is disputed; the style is not that of St. John as exhibited either in his Gospel or in his Epistles, supposing we allow those, or any one of them, to be his work. The Apocalypse is mystical, expressed in correspondences and figures; its mysticism is incomprehensible; if interpretation is anywhere vouchsafed, we are none the wiser; the explanations regarding the two witnesses in chap. xii., or regarding the heads and horns of the Beast in chap. xvii., need explanation themselves.

But it must be recollected that we are not concerned with proof of doctrine. How does the

Apocalypse stand when the inquiry is instead whether the Divinity of Christ was believed by His disciples and expressly taught by them, and whether it belonged therefore—truth or delusion, still belonged—to the Christianity of the First Age?

There is no initial objection to be taken such as the critical school conceives. It is nothing inconsistent with the character of an Apostle, if he should claim to have had experience of supernatural ecstasy. St. Paul makes the claim for himself—that he was caught up to the third heaven and heard words unlawful for human lips to repeat (2 Cor. xii. 4). Nor is the authorship of St. John by any means so assailable as critics would have it to be, when the internal evidence is in question. The literary style is not that of the Gospel and Epistles of St. John, not altogether. The style is affected by the subject. But the Johannine manner sufficiently appears, the Johannine phrase recurs. St. John Baptist names Jesus the Lamb of God only in St. John's Gospel, and that is His name in the Apocalypse.* Jesus is the Word of God only in St. John's Gospel (i. 1, 14), and the name is given Him in the Apocalypse (xix. 13). If it is said that these

* It comes upon the reader as a surprise, when the *name* of Christ meets his eye, only twice, and only in one chapter (xx. 4, 6), during the progress of the narrative.

reproductions were too ready to hand for any pseudo-John to miss, the issue is narrowed to be *either* that St. John is author, *or* some one who fraudulently personates him. It is not the case of an unidentified composition but of a forgery. That is to be noted and will be mentioned again on a succeeding page. Meanwhile, there are other more subtle coincidences.

In the Apocalypse is the vision of those who "have washed their robes and made them white in the Blood of the Lamb," and in the First Epistle (i. 7) "the Blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin." In the Gospel "the Word was made flesh and tabernacled (ἐσκήνωσεν) among us," and in the Apocalypse (xxi. 3) "the tabernacle (σκηνή) of God is with men and He shall tabernacle (σκηνώσει) among them." The verb is only used by St. John, and the metaphor is peculiar to him in that connection. Another expression peculiar to St. John, perhaps not so well known to be, is found in the Apocalypse (xxi. 7): "He that overcometh shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son." It is found in the Gospel (i. 12): "As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God"; and in the First Epistle (iii. 1): "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we

should be called the sons of God." * "He that overcometh" is also recollected as belonging to the First Epistle (ii. 13; iv. 4; v. 4, 5). Critics are agreed that "light" and "truth" are tonal words of St. John's, and in consequence "lie" and "liar" are terms of reproach that readily occur to his mind. We have in the Apocalypse, "The fearful and unbelieving . . . and all liars shall have their part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone" (Apoc. xxi. 8; cf. ver. 27, xxii. 15, ii. 2); in the Gospel, "If I said I knew not God, I should be a liar like you" (viii. 55; cf. ver. 44); in the First Epistle, "Who is a liar but he who denieth that Jesus is Christ?" (ii. 22; cf. vv. 21, 27, i. 6, 10, iv. 20).

The Apocalypse, however irrational and senseless seeming in some of its passages, is allowed to possess literary distinction and to exhibit dramatical art. Witness the picture of the fall of Babylon in chap. xviii., or the account of the adoration of heaven in chaps. iv, and v. If its mystical construction and imagery might be taken from Ezekiel and Daniel, the finished product is no whit inferior and has originality of its own. It is a well-known critical determina-

* In 2 Cor. vi. 18; Heb. xii. 7, etc., it is not the same. The *relation* of sonship is compared; the *character* is not conferred as reward and privilege.

tion that a writing of great excellence cannot well be spurious ; the Apocalypse is no forgery, and the suggestion of two pages back is demolished. Who, then, was the unnamed or unremembered author ? What other is there, even of the Apostles, who could be imagined to have written the Apocalypse, and if it was any one of post-Apostolic times, how comes it that nothing is known of so distinguished a writer ? “ They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more ; neither shall the sun light upon them nor any heat. For the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne shall shepherd them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters ; * and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes ” (Apoc. vii. 16, 17). “ To the shepherd the gate-keeper openeth and the sheep hear his voice, and he calleth his own sheep by name and leadeth them out. And when he hath put forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. I am the Good Shepherd, and know My sheep and Mine know Me ” (John x. 3, 4, 14). Is there no resemblance ? Where else find that style ? †

* The image may copy or be compared with the same in Ps. xxiii. 1, 2, where the Shepherd is Jehovah.

† In the Gospel it is Jesus who speaks and in the Apocalypse one of the Elders, but still the style of St. John, as his reporting.

But a more pertinent matter—whoever be the writer of the Apocalypse, is he sincere, does he believe himself to have had the visions he describes, or is it but the literary form that belongs to such a composition, nothing more intended? Is it delusion, the fancy of a sick brain, the delirium of religious frenzy? But the writer three times over solemnly protests the truth of what he writes: “These are true words of God” (xix. 9); “these words are faithful and true” (xxi. 5; xxii. 6). He represents himself as bidden to “write the things which thou sawest” (i. 19); the contents of the volume are “what he saw” (i. 2). The mystic correspondences are no doubt perplexing, but there is nothing incoherent in the progress of the narrative as the several visions succeed, nor anything irrational in the style of their telling. “And they worshipped the Beast, saying, Who is like the Beast? who is able to war with him?” (xiii. 4). “The kings of the earth shall bewail her and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning, standing afar off for fear of her torment. Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city, in one hour her judgment come!” (xviii. 9, 10). A writer in such style should be shrewdly and sensibly observant of things about him.

If not belonging to the age of St. John, the Apocalypse is known within the Church inside a century from its reputed date, as witnessed by St. Justin Martyr and by St. Irenæus. It is addressed conjointly to seven leading Churches of Asia Minor, having attached to it a special message for each several Church. The Churches include Ephesus, on which St. Paul expended so much missionary labour, and Laodicea, to which also he wrote an Epistle (Col. iv. 16). The Apocalypse must be taken to accord with the Christian belief of those Churches in the time of St. Justin and of St. Irenæus, and during whatever period of years before their time. The book in our generation is represented to be one that we should not read with any particular attention ; a detailed acquaintance with its contents is thought to show eccentricity and even to lead into mental delusion. But the book itself says otherwise : “ Blessed is he who readeth and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and who observe the things written therein ” (i. 3). The Apocalypse is recognised in the Church since the time of St. Justin and of St. Irenæus or before their time as belonging to the Canon of Scripture, and it manifestly professes to stand on the same level of inspiration as the prophecies of Ezekiel and Daniel, with which it is cognate.

The subject of the Apocalypse is the Second Coming of Christ and the end of the world. The chief personage in the action is the Lamb. The four-and-twenty Elders in chap. iv. fall down and worship Him who sat upon the throne, saying, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive honour and glory and power." But equally, in the next chapter, they fall down before the Lamb, saying, "Worthy is the Lamb to receive power and honour and glory." The end of the book is the marriage-supper of the Lamb.

Who, then, and what is the Lamb? Obviously Jesus, whom the Baptist so named. "Jesus Christ" in i. 6, and "the Lamb" in v. 10, "made us kings and priests to God." But Jesus in the Apocalypse is not as He is described during His human ministry. The difference is not only that He has now a heavenly body instead of an earthly. He is transfigured beyond the radiation of Mount Tabor. We have a description of Jesus as He appeared to the writer at the beginning of the revelation made to him, a particular description such as is given of no other of the inhabitants of heaven unless of the Mother of God (xii. 1). The vision was of "one like unto the Son of Man"; * "His feet

* The title is certainly as in Dan. vii. 13. Cf. Dan. x. 5, 6, where the description and the action are closely resemblant.

were like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace, and His voice was as the voice of many waters " (i. 13-16 ; cf. xix. 12).

Some exaggeration, it is said, must be expected both of language and of statement. Some limitation also—it may be rejoined—for the use of figure and type, as the composition requires ; other divergent splendours, the description differing. Thus, seated on a cloud is " One like unto the Son of Man," having on His head a golden crown and in His hand a sharp sickle (xiv. 14), and later there enters a Rider on a white horse, and His name is " the Word of God " (xix. 11-13). The figure of the Lamb must be abandoned for the description of either vision.

Whatever, it is said, be the language or the statement, the Lamb is certainly not God, not " the Almighty, who was and is and is to come," not He who sits upon the great white throne, not He before whom the hosts of heaven bow down and adore, saying, " Holy, holy, holy." * But in His message to the Church of Laodicea

* Apoc. iv. 8. In Isaiah (vi. 3) one seraph cried to another, " Holy, holy, holy, the Lord of hosts." It is asked how the triple adoration should be differently understood in the one sentence than as it occurs in the other. How indeed ? That is the question the Trinitarian would be glad to have answered.

(iii. 21) Jesus said, "I have sat down with My Father on His throne." The Lamb is first introduced as being "in the midst of the throne" (v. 6).^{*} It is the nearest that expression can give. The throne is "the throne of God and the Lamb" (xxii. 3). Allusion is made to "the great day of Almighty God," and it is added, "Behold, I come as a thief" (xvi. 14, 15), as Jesus said He would come (Matt. xxiv. 42, 43; cf. 2 Peter iii. 10). Jesus, the Lamb, is not excluded, when the Almighty is named.

The Lamb is associated with God throughout, coagent and equipotent. In the Day of Judgment—as prophesied by Isaiah (ii. 21) and by Hosea (x. 8), and as Christ foretold it on His way to Calvary (Luke xxiii. 30)—"the kings of the earth, the great and the wealthy, slaves and free, shall call to the mountains and to the rocks, Fall on us and hide us from the wrath of the Lamb" (Apoc. vi. 16). The great day, the day of wrath, that is named in Scripture, is the day of *His* wrath. "Who shall stand," wrote Malachi (iii. 2), "when He appeareth?" "Who shall stand"—echoes the Apocalypse (ver. 17)—"in the great day of the wrath of the Lamb?"

^{*} Later (vii. 17), "in the midst of the Throne" is made a titular description of the Lamb.

The vast unnumbered crowd of those who have come out of the great tribulation, prostrate before the throne, ascribe "Salvation to our God and to the Lamb" (vii. 9, 10); the glory of God gives illumination to the heavenly city, and the Lamb is the light of it (xxi. 23); the Lord God Almighty is the temple of the city and the Lamb likewise is (ver. 22).

The picture conveyed is of the Lamb sharing in every exercise of the sovereignty of God and being conjoined in every act of adoration that is offered to God. In the introduction of the Apocalypse (i. 5) Jesus is "the Ruler of the kings of the earth"; the Lamb (xvii. 14), the Word of God (xix. 16), is "King of kings and Lord of lords." It is the special title of the Almighty in Scripture; we have (Deut. x. 17) "The Lord our God is God of gods and Lord of lords," and (Dan. ii. 47) "Your God is a God of gods and a Lord of kings."

We may observe the language of the Apocalyptic messages to the several Churches. Jesus promises or threatens as of Himself—"I will give thee the crown of life" (ii. 10); "I will slay her children in death" (ver. 23). Jesus is He "who holds the key of David, who openeth and none shutteth, and who shutteth and none openeth" (iii. 7). It is Jesus who "searcheth

the reins and hearts," * and who "giveth to each according to his works" (ii. 23). These being undisputed prerogatives of God—"The righteous God trieth the hearts and reins" (Ps. vii. 9); "To Thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy, for Thou renderest to every man according to his work" (lxi. [lxii.] 11, 12). The Four-and-Twenty Elders fall down before Him who sat upon the throne and adore Him who liveth for ever and ever (τῷ ζῶντι εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων, iv. 10) and Jesus says of Himself, "I am living for ever and ever (ζῶν εἰμὶ εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων) and I hold the keys of hell and death" (i. 18).

The opening of the Apocalypse, after the usual form of greeting, which is, however, in the Name of the Trinity (i. 5, 6; cf. 2 Cor. xiii. 13), is a doxology offered to Christ "who hath washed us from our sins in His Blood," and a forewarning of His coming in the clouds, when "every eye shall behold Him and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him." There follows, "Yea, Amen," and then this sentence: "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, who was and is and is to come, the Almighty" (ver. 8), wholly out of connection and having no

* We must not translate "no man shutteth," "no man openeth," which is less universal. It is "none," neither man nor any other. (Cf. Job xii. 14: "There can be no opening.")

relevance, unless it is spoken by Christ and refers to Him. It is congruent that, when Jesus appears (ver. 11), He uses the sentence to designate Himself: "I am Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last"; and similarly at the end of the book (xxii. 13). In the first chapter there is no mention of God apart from Jesus, to make the sentence there referable to God purely and simply, "the Almighty" must mean Jesus.

We should then find other texts which have the same bearing. After the second woe has passed and the seventh angel has sounded his trumpet, "loud voices were heard in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign for ever and ever" (xi. 15). Who is it—is it "our Lord," or is it "His Christ," who shall reign? Or does the pronoun express indifferently either? * The Four-and-twenty Elders then adore, saying, "We give Thee thanks, Lord God Almighty, who art and wast and art to come, because Thou hast taken Thy great power and reigned." Is Christ separate from the Lord God Almighty, who is and was and is to come?

* The same question is to be raised in xxii. 3: "The throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him."

Again, on the fall of Babylon, the Glorias and Alleluias (xix. 1-6) which are sung in heaven—"Alleluia, for the Lord God Almighty reigneth"—are they offered otherwise than in chap. v. 13 and chap. vii. 10, offered to God apart, and on this occasion of worship the Lamb altogether left out, not declared to reign? In immediate sequence is the announcement that "the marriage of the Lamb is come" (ver. 7), and presently (ver. 13) the Word of God goes forth to war and is "King of kings," so that He certainly does reign; and if the Alleluia is sung "because the Lord God Almighty reigneth," it might quite well mean "because the Lamb reigneth."

The first words of the Apocalypse declare it to be "the Revelation of Jesus Christ," and that "He showed it to His servant John, sending it by His angel." Accordingly, at the end of the book (xxii. 16) Jesus says, "I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify these things to you." But immediately before (ver. 6) it was, "The Lord God of the holy prophets sent His angel."* The Lamb may be distinguished, as some expositors allege, from Him who sits upon the throne; but Jesus and the Lord God are made here to be the same, one or the other written

* St. Peter (1 Peter i. 11) writes of "the Spirit of Christ" being in the holy prophets.

indifferently. Incidentally, recurring to the matter of authorship, is there not very conspicuous agreement with the language of the Gospel of St. John—"The Word was with God and the Word was God" ?

The Unitarian, the present representative of the Christianity of Channing which believes in "Our Father in heaven" and in the Sermon on the Mount, will not be persuaded that Jesus is God, whatever the Apocalypse may have in it. The Apocalypse has no historical character, nor indeed any dogmatic. The Unitarian thinks that can hardly need stating. It is a work of imagination, a creation of the writer's brain, expressing in mystical language the belief of early Christians about the approaching end of the world, no more intended for literal reality than is "Paradise Lost" or "The Pilgrim's Progress." At any rate, whether so intended or not, that is what it is. If it is said to be the account of an actual *revelation*, the claim must be categorically refused. It purports to tell of future events, but it *reveals* nothing. No consistent picture of the destruction of the world is presented. Seven kings or ten kings are first to reign. How does that help towards recognition of its approach ? How are we informed about heaven, so as to know about it as we did not

know before? No one shall persuade me that the throne of God is attended, as innermost in station and first in dignity, by a lion and a calf, and a man and an eagle, all of them six-winged and a hundred-eyed—mere plagiarism of Ezekiel (chaps. i. and x.). When and where do I get rid of types and correspondences and come to realities? And without reality what revelation can there be? Religious inquirers cannot accept the Apocalypse as proof of anything.

But they can. They can, they must, accept the Apocalypse as proof of what is written in the Apocalypse—except for variations of manuscript, which are infrequent and of no vital significance. *Quod scripsi, scripsi*. The Unitarian must grant that the representation of Christ, the description of His divine character and power, is in the Apocalypse not less but, if anything, more fully expressed than elsewhere in the volume of the New Testament. In whatever century published, whenever included in the Canon, that was the accepted Christianity of that century. Supposing it was published during the lifetime of the last survivor of the Apostles? Supposing it is found to be acknowledged by St. Justin and by St. Irenæus? Jesus is not, we are instructed, a divine Person, not God, the proof of it is not a hair's breadth nearer. But He is believed to be

by the writer of the Apocalypse and by the Church that accepted the Apocalypse, *e.g.* the seven Churches of Asia, to which the book was addressed, must be presumed to hold such belief when the Apocalypse was written for them. That is all that is attempted to establish in this Excursus.

EXCURSUS III

AN EPISODE OF ST. LUKE'S GOSPEL

A GREAT deal of Christian profession, at least in England, proposes to accept the Incarnation as a speculative opinion. It is to be like something in Plato, or as a new æsthetic canon. True, unassailable; but belonging to reflection, to doctrinal language and expression. Was it God who lay in the manger?—seems an inadmissible question, solecist, did God appear on the solid earth, the God before whom we (no, not we, but Mahometans) prostrate ourselves and cover our heads with dust, God whose vision would wipe us out like the breath of incandescent flame? No, no; that is not the kind of thing, rushing, breathless, like that; that is not the idea of dogma, religious article, opinion, faith. Consequently, and among such minds, there is a notorious and openly expressed exception against the Fourth Gospel with its *Ego et Pater unum sumus*. You do not, they protest, find that kind of statement in the Synoptics. The Fourth

Gospel—though the allegation may be difficult of proof—every one is convinced to be post-Apostolic, and it has something to do with Philo. Do let us stick to the Parables and the Sermon on the Mount.

Well, there is no doubt that the Fourth Gospel is that, it professes to be (xx. 31)—a literal, direct declaration that Jesus is God. But there is nothing novel in that, even supposing the work to be in truth Alexandrine. It is quite consonant with what was already written in the other three. Only that the casual interpreter of Scripture is dull of literary intelligence—a man who very likely writes “lay” for “lie,” correspondent or possibly contributor in the newspapers. Here is a passage missed entirely, in one of the Synoptics, a parable too.

The account in the Synoptics (Matt. xxvi. 6, fol. ; Mark xiv. 3, fol. ; Luke vii. 36, fol.) of the sinful woman who anointed our Lord, is by various opinion identified with or distinguished from the narrative of John xii. 1, fol., but the occasion in Matthew and Mark appears the same. The discrepancy lies in St. Luke's account as compared with the other three. The company are represented as commenting to one another : “ Who is this who forgiveth sins also ? ” Just as with the paralytic in Matt. ix., Mark ii. :

“ Who can forgive sins but God alone ? ” It might certainly be argued that our Lord in pronouncing forgiveness claimed to exercise divine powers, and still more convincingly that the Evangelists in recording His speech intended to represent Him as doing so. The argument, going only so far, is significant. But it by no means yet seizes the truth of the presentation. The marvel—as literal, as pronounced, as anything in the Fourth Gospel, and in preceding pages here several of the more startling Johannine compositions have been transcribed—the marvels contained in the precedent or apologetic parable recorded to have been spoken by our Lord for the Pharisee’s behoof. For what, in the name of wonder, is the application of this story of the two debtors and of their debts ? The debt in the application, is the debt—does any one interpret otherwise ?—of sin, as in “ Forgive us our debts ” ; the merciful creditor beyond question God, the Judge of all. The grievous sinner, assured of the divine mercy, loves, as the publican of another parable more truly worshipped, who said, “ God be merciful.” More truly the sinner worships and loves (“ the publicans and harlots go into the kingdom of heaven before you ”) than does the Pharisee, whether of the Temple or of the banquet, who esteems that “ little is

forgiven him." How, in the name of lucidity and not of casual dullness, is this love and gratitude shown? What is the actual case that the parable was composed to fit? It is shown by the woman who washed the feet of Jesus with her tears and wiped them with her hair; Jesus composed the story to suit the scene that was being enacted. He who forgave, the Merciful Deity, Judge to acquit or condemn, who forgave so that she loved Him and so that she displays more love than any other there, is He who sits at the banquet—who forgave her so that she loved Him, and who pronounces her now forgiven because she loves. Our Lord thus claims, in a parable by the way, in His ordinary course of teaching, to be "our Father," whom we beseech: "Forgive us our debts"—*ego et Pater unum sumus*. More, the Evangelist represents His so claiming, represents it in the ordinary course of his Evangelical narrative, as nothing strange, as easily recognisable, as commonplace in the Christian opinion and belief of his day, needing no extraordinary notice, as it might be "Love your enemies," or "Blessed are the pure in heart." The parable is to exhibit—like many others in St. Luke, the Prodigal Son or the Lost Sheep—that God loves the repentant sinner.

That—the foregoing exposition—is the whole

of the direct and apparent moral purpose. As *obiter scriptum*, as incidental, God who is merciful and is loved, is taken as Jesus who speaks. The aspect of our Lord, not to the Alexandrine or Johannine reflection, but to the earlier simple Gospel story, was that of God in the world, the real God, whom "every eye shall see, and they also who pierced Him, and all families of the earth shall wail because of Him," when the graves are opened in the last tremendous day. Sweep away, if you will, the theology of St. Paul, or the mysticism of the "divine" Evangelist, but leave us only the woman who was a sinner, and her story alone shall justify Nicæa or Rome. Wherever the Gospel of St. Luke is preached—the Gospel of St. Luke no less than the Gospel of St. John—this shall be told as a memorial of her and of Him who accepted her.

EXCURSUS IV

REVELATION—*NOVISSIMIS DIEBUS ISTIS LOCUTUS
EST NOBIS IN FILIO*—HEB. I. 1

IN the first place, the evidence of Christian theology at the date of authorship of the Epistle may be noticed. It is not the question, what is the authority and authenticity of this theology, but the date of it and its character. Who is the Son ? Incontrovertibly, one may suppose, Jesus Christ. But who otherwise ? Observe : the Creator of the entire universe and the Heir of its consummation ; the effulgence, the presentation, of Deity ; not an angel, but the angels adore Him ; not the Son, as mortals are the offspring of God (Acts xvii. 28), or as the heavenly hosts, sons of God, shouted for joy (Job xxxviii. 7) ; an exclusive Son as none else is named ; more, addressed—in the language of inspiration, by the tongue of God—as God and Lord, who shall outlive the stars and whose throne is in *sæculum sæculi* ; who is everlastingly the *Idem Ipse*. In appearance, it is true, a whimpering babe, a man of poverty and of labour, a prophet and teacher

rejected in the end, an incendiary and revolutionist executed by the civil power. All the time, when addressed, when derided, when mocked, when scourged, when crucified—all the time. This that has been said, in the judgment and by the creed of the writer of the Epistle : *ut vestimentum veterascent, Tu autem permanebis.*

This, then, is a revelation ; Christianity is not merely a revealed religion—a phrase to which no very precise meaning is attached—but it is a revelation ; its doctrines, its worship, its moral code, revealed. This is the account of Christianity at that early date. Exactly as to the Hebrew fathers God had spoken by prophets, so He had spoken to the children Himself. The Hebrew people were distinguished above every other nation in the world, separate, elect, by the theological tradition of patriarchs who had “walked with God” (Gen. v. 22 ; vi. 9) and by the Law that had been revealed on Sinai. They had had again a revelation, made beside the Lake of Galilee and in the streets of Jerusalem, as real, as authentic, in these latter days. It was the same as the earlier, parallel in its supernatural reality, in kind the same. But in degree, in grandeur, in awe, greater by how great a difference ! Then the prophet had spoken in the name of God, by the inspiration of God ;

now God had spoken Himself, the Lord who laid the foundations of the earth, the God whose years shall not change. The supreme and absolute difference of the religion bearing the name of Christ, that it is a Revelation.

How this Revelation profits mankind, how it is a gospel of glad tidings, is three-fold. It reveals to humanity at large the unity of the Godhead, of our Father who is in heaven ; it assures us of a life after death ; it reassures us against such dreams as in that sleep of death may come, since there is no condemnation to those in Christ Jesus (Rom. viii. 1). The second of these boons deserves, and may conveniently receive in the argument, some preliminary exposition.

Immortality, that death is not the end, has become after so many generations of Christianity, an inherited association. It is difficult to imagine, in pre-Christian times, the weight so palpably in the other scale. The agnostic with us has a lingering hope, and our suicides are too puny to take their own lives except on the hazard that they do not make an end. The undiscovered country is hardly so speculative to the general mind as the composition of the planet Mars. And yet a cultivated and reflective intelligence will hardly deny that if it were not for Chris-

tianity the other world would scarcely belong to his philosophy. The "untutored mind" of "the poor Indian" is other. Life hereafter is confidently expected by ignorant and undeveloped races. Nor should any philosopher deny that there are presages, "intimations of immortality," in our surroundings and in ourselves. But insufficient. The immense probability of our conscious experience, of our common sense, is against it. The flower dies and withers. Our loved horse and dog we allow we shall know no more. Why should we have any other prospect with our loved human friend? Ashes to ashes and dust to dust. No more surely does the flower fade and moulder than we—*οἷη περ φύλλων γενέη*. Because we have imagination and constructive thought, we create a heaven. But it is nothing more. Because of the strong instinct of life, we dispute death. But as the life wanes, it seems no longer disputable. Hope, perhaps; but the philosopher of the ancient world knew that it was no more.

But revelation! If a prophet, one by whom God spoke, had declared it. If an angel—and if there were such things as angels—had brought the glad tidings. There is no such revelation; God reveals no longer by prophet, but "has spoken to us by His Son." And "to which of

the angels said He at any time, Thou art My Son ? ” The revelation is : “ I am the life ; let not your heart be troubled about what shall be hereafter, nor be afraid of the prospect ; believe in God, believe in Me ” (John xi. 25 ; xiv. 1).

A revelation obviously, though in such external humbleness, of the very most terrific and stupendous character. “ Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever ”—Thine, who didst sit at meat in the Pharisee’s house. Not, surely, one for us to debate and pull to pieces, and construct again to the satisfaction of our conscience and of our reason. God works in secret ways, in the formation of the rock, in the evolution of the planet, in the constant palpitating mystery of the genesis of life. But when He condescends to appear openly in the world, so that we are spoken to by Himself, when He takes the likeness of the man whom in the beginning He had made in His likeness, at least then He does not paint a door and leave it for us to scrawl and scribble upon. What God reveals, is revealed. It does not lie in a half-light, a thing to be investigated, and the truth of it approached more nearly according as the spiritual nature should be higher or the intellect more acute. How, if it were so, could He consign us to damnation if we did not accept the

revelation? "he that believeth not will be condemned" (Mark xvi. 16). There is no damnation? Then there is no Christ. Thou hast appealed to Cæsar and to Cæsar thou shalt go. If *criticism* is anything, there is not the smallest doubt that Jesus in the beginning of His ministry took up the preaching of His forerunner: "The axe is laid to the root"—"Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." You cannot separate from the doctrine of Jesus—you would like to do so, but *criticism* forbids—the terrible accompaniments of the quenchless fires and the undying worm, of the wedding guest with strange garment, of the judgment of those who wake and find themselves on the left of the Judge. Damned, because those gave no cup of cold water. Yes, but damned equally and as well, if they did not believe—"If you believe not that I am He" (John viii. 24). Is God then a demon, to throw a doctrine into the world for us to muse over and to muddle—an apple of discord, to generate a hundred sects wrangling and shedding blood? Is God unable to reveal when He wills to do it? Or is it consonant with the Omnipotent Majesty that when He intervenes it should be for His creatures to criticise and amend?

With the progress of time the name of

Revelation has altered out of all recognition, retaining scarcely a shred of its original etymology. It is wrapped in ambiguity and clogged by interpretations and traditions, out of which have evolved themselves some four hundred (according to the directory) religious denominations with as many various versions of the thing which, if revealed, should at any rate be plain and unambiguous. But Revelation now has grown to mean merely sacred literature. We may be told indifferently to show a reverence for the Bible or for Revelation, a passage from Scripture or from Revelation is quoted, the record of Christianity belongs to Revelation or to the Gospel narratives. Originally—no one shall think or say otherwise—the Revelation was nothing literary. It was oral statement; God hath in these latter days *spoken to us* by His Son.

“Yes, to be sure; and who is to feel any confidence, after this lapse of time, as to what in particular was spoken? In such sort, we protest, are we able, by such objection raised, utterly to rout and refute the reasoning; we have God in a dilemma, and compel Him to sit down.”
Wait!

The revelation was committed to chosen disseminators—chosen, observe, by Omniscience, and their exposition would be true: “He that heareth

you heareth Me" (Luke x. 16). The twelve Apostles are to evangelise the world. "Well, and what then?" What then! The tradition of the Apostles is the revelation, and it is what we have to-day. Erroneous? Not at all. The providence of God, which ordained the revelation, is competent to preserve it; and if the speech of the revealer be that of God, then He pledged His word that it should be always so preserved (Matt. xvi. 18; xxviii. 20). Disputed and variously interpreted? No; one, universal, Apostolic. The sects are not the Church, but severances from her, and the tradition of Protestantism has no pretence to be more than the tradition of the Augustinian Luther.

Any one who accepts the account given as above, in the opening of the Epistle to the Hebrews, regarding the character of the Revelation, and the absolute Deity and supreme Majesty of Him by whom the revelation was made, any one who is assured of his ground so far, must apparently admit all the rest. By an almost deductive necessity. Or at least there can be no other alternative consequence which may appear as rational. We cannot fathom the mind or discern the ultimate design of Omniscience. But the tremendous occurrence, beyond creation itself, "once in the end of the world,"

the descent of God upon the globe—nay, much more ; the union of Infinity with the finite—it does seem only rational to suppose that all this is not in the subsequent progress of the planetary system to drift into haze and grow ineffectual with the years, to melt as the snows of yesterday. If—on the other horn—a man refuses the language of the Epistle regarding the Divinity of the Son, he cannot be allowed to be a Christian, any one who does not believe in the Incarnation.

The infallibility of the Church, then, which seems so monstrous a claim to the world outside, is nothing more than the overruling providence of God, as above described. It is not any spiritual gift bestowed on any one man or body of men, but only that the truth of the Revelation is providentially maintained. As pledged by immutable promise to St. Peter and to his successors after him, that they should not “ make shipwreck concerning the faith.” The care of God is over His Church. Surely nothing to offend in that. It is a familiar and assured conception to any pious mind, that one is providentially, it may be, saved from calamity, or directed to some happy contingency. So is it, we believe, by divine providence, and in carrying out the divine order, that nations prosper and achieve a career. The same conception may be

extended to the continuous existence of the Church; but with some difference, however. It is a supernatural order and not the natural that is here subserved, and the overruling power is directed, not to preserve against fortuitous mischance, or to promote in prosperity and achievement—not alone or primordially so—but to the one end of preserving the Revelation. The misconceptions, the follies, the incapacities, of the human agency are overruled, and events are so disposed that the truth remains unimpaired. “If this work be not of God, it will come to naught; but if otherwise, take heed that you be not found fighting against God.”

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